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VOL. I.

WEIZSÄCKER'S APOSTOLIC AGE.

VOL. I.



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# THE APOSTOLIC AGE

OF THE

## CHRISTIAN CHURCH

BY  
*Karl*  
CARL VON WEIZSÄCKER

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*TRANSLATED FROM THE SECOND AND REVISED EDITION*

BY  
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## PREFACE BY THE EDITOR

THE new series of translations by Messrs. Williams and Norgate auspiciously begins with Weizsäcker's great work on the Apostolic Age, of which the first volume now appears. This work is confessedly of exceptional value, exhibiting as it does not merely the learning we expect in a first-class German author, but a moderation and soundness of judgment which are by no means common either in Germany or anywhere else. It has the merit of being not only able and masterly, but extremely interesting, discussing a multitude of questions relating to the origin of the Christian Church in a manner fitted to engage the attention of general readers not less than of professional theologians. The style is luminous and easy, and the pages are not encumbered with learned foot-notes. On some subjects, as, *e.g.*, the Resurrection of Christ and the historical value of the Book of Acts, readers may meet with views from which they earnestly dissent. But even there it will be found that the author's treatment is scientific in spirit and reverent

in tone. In the preface of his work on *God and the Bible*, the late Mr. Arnold pronounces Ferdinand Christian Baur an unsafe guide because of the 'vigour and rigour' characteristic of most German Biblical critics. Weizsäcker compares very favourably with Baur in this respect. There is plenty of vigour in his book, but not nearly so much of the rigour of which Mr. Arnold complains.

Much pains have been taken to make the translation at once faithful to the author's meaning and readable English.

A second volume, to appear in due course, will complete the work.

A. B. BRUCE.

GLASGOW, *December* 1893.



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## ERRATA.

P. 6, l. 9 from bottom, for 'absolute' read 'immediate,'  
and for 'the' read 'its.'

P. 13, l. 14 from bottom, for 'graces' read 'gifts.'

## BOOK I

### THE EARLIEST JEWISH CHURCH

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE BEGINNING

##### § 1. *The Assembling of the Disciples.*

‘THIS denomination had its origin from Christus, who in the reign of Tiberius had been executed by the procurator, Pontius Pilate. The deadly superstition, though suppressed for a time, broke out again and spread not only through Judæa, which was first to suffer from it, but through Rome also, the resort which draws to it all that is hideous and shameful.’

However little is to be learned from the account here given by the Roman historian of the origins of the Christian Church, yet we can have no difficulty in perceiving his idea. The sect had been suppressed, or had withdrawn for a time into concealment after the death of its founder. It is obvious, besides, that it cannot have been otherwise. The historians of the New Testament, of course, look at the matter from another point of view than that of Tacitus or his authority. It is not the crisis that brings the disciples into public notice that first attracts their attention, but the still earlier impulse that causes them to reunite. This is, at least, the standpoint of the older tradition of the New Testament. It has adjusted the words of Zechariah (xiii. 7) about the shepherd and the sheep, so as to make them serve to explain and justify the dispersion of the disciples at the death of Jesus, Matt. xxvi. 31; Mark xiv. 27. The dispersion is brought to an

end by a reunion, which the same tradition, immediately after quoting the prophecy, transfers to Galilee, Matt. xxvi. 32, xxviii. 7, 10; Mark xiv. 28, xvi. 7. They departed to Galilee in order there to look upon Him who had risen, and by Him to be themselves reanimated. Later on, indeed, the course of events is differently described, as we see from Luke's writings. Luke no longer knows anything of the dispersion. Everybody remains in Jerusalem in complete harmony and union. A definite period is also fixed by Luke for their reanimation, Acts ii. But this only relates to their entrance on their public activity. It is no longer the reunion proper. The same position is also taken up by the Fourth Gospel. But it then repeats the older tradition of the events in Galilee, though merely in the form of a loosely-connected appendix, c. xxi. Undoubtedly the Church became historical in the strict sense of the term first in Jerusalem. Even the legends, that place the introduction of the disciples to their life-calling in Galilee, Matt. xxviii. 19; John xxi. 15, make it point them away from the old home. Of a Galilean Church we have no trace in later times, until we come to the quite untrustworthy legend in Hegesippus, *Eus. Ecc. Hist.*, iii. 20. If any such ever existed it remained at all events of no importance. Still we cannot pass over this earlier history, this preface to the origins in Jerusalem. We are concerned to explain those new origins so far as may on the whole be possible.

The purport of the older narrative is not merely that upon the death of the Master the disciples, by going to Galilee, turned their back for the moment on His cause, but that there they saw the all-determining appearance of the risen Christ. In Luke they remain in Jerusalem, precisely because it is there that this intercourse with the Master takes place. Now these two representations are irreconcilable. Nor is there anything in the circumstances to decide which probably we ought to prefer. It is natural enough to suppose that the fate of Jesus struck His followers with fear and unnerved them. It is also far from unlikely that the repose of their native place, and the reawakening



of all their recollections should have helped to reanimate their spirits. But who would consider it impossible that they should have been rooted by their fear to the place of horror, or that a powerful reaction should have set in under impressions that were being continually renewed? And we must remember that the resolve to reside and to begin anew in Jerusalem must, in any case, have been formed soon enough. We are therefore forced to make our choice on other grounds. The question is decided by the account of the first two Gospels. Even this has been pragmatically conceived in the present form of the evangelists' narrative. But the fact is not invented. This is proved by the application of the prophet's saying, which is required to explain and interpret the dispersion as a divine decree. The prophecy did not first create the fact. The latter is the solid reality which prompted the interpretation. And our conclusion is only confirmed by the doubts with which Luke's narrative is confronted at every point.

But if the disciples of Jesus at first withdrew to Galilee after His death, then it is self-evident that there also they experienced the 'uplifting' which impelled them so soon afterwards to return to Jerusalem. Now this uplifting was undoubtedly equivalent to the belief that Jesus lived, that He had risen. Here we have the kernel of all the narratives of the New Testament that refer to this time, however obscure and fragmentary they may be. That it is so is an inevitable inference from the place occupied by the resurrection in the earliest apostolic preaching. But we can illustrate the matter more directly from our best historical account of the Christophanies, that of the Apostle Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 4 ff. This statement closes with the one he himself witnessed; what was that for him but the beginning of his faith, nay, the beginning also of his new vocation, his apostleship? But what it was for the last to witness it, it was also for the first. When Peter saw the first manifestation, his faith arose. It was the starting point of his new faith, *i.e.* faith in the risen Christ, something quite different from his former trust in a living Master. And then also

arose in him the certainty of his new calling and the impulse to fulfil it.

In the narratives of our Gospels the course of events is different. The new faith took its rise in Jerusalem; in Matthew and Mark before the disciples went to Galilee, in Luke without any mention of the return home, in the appendix to the fourth Gospel, c. xxi., with the latter event restored. In these accounts the first point is that the grave was found empty, according to the Synoptics by women of the company, according to John by them, and also the two leading disciples. The discovery is accompanied in the Synoptics by the announcement of an angel (in Luke there are two) that the resurrection had taken place. Immediately after the sight of the empty grave, after the series of events at the grave itself, Matthew and John, at least, state that women, while still in the neighbourhood of the tomb and during the same visit, were permitted to see Jesus, and that He spoke with them. And, finally, the whole cycle of narratives is closed by accounts which the evangelists, with the exception of Mark, give of various appearances to the disciples. These took place in the next few days, according to Luke and John in Jerusalem, according to Matthew and the appendix to John in Galilee. The events at the grave itself, however, form the central point on which everything else depends. In them we have the real evidence for the belief in the resurrection; we have at the same time the manner in which the resurrection was conceived, the departure of the resuscitated body from the grave. Only in the after appearances in Luke and John it is suggested that the body was no longer subject to natural conditions.

When we compare with this the proof of the resurrection which Paul derives from the appearances of Christ, 1 Cor. xv. 4 ff., two points of difference at once suggest themselves. First, the Apostle does not make any reference to the events at the grave, in other words to the proof of the departure from it. Secondly, his account of the appearances that establish the fact of the resurrection differs decidedly from that contained in the Gospels.

Paul reminds his readers of the first and most essential parts of his preaching, what he had told them of the death and resurrection of Jesus. Both events had happened according to the Scriptures, therefore according to God's purpose. In this lay their saving power, and at the same time the necessity that everything should have happened as it did. The burial is also mentioned, but only as a fact, and without any reference to Scripture. It had no separate importance for salvation. It only showed that Jesus had really been dead, and that therefore there was a genuine resurrection to life. He does not speak further of the death. It was only the resurrection that was questioned, and therefore he proceeds to relate the appearances in order to prove the fact. Now, the circumstance that he passes over the events at the grave is striking, if only because he has just mentioned the burial, but chiefly because they would have served his purpose best. In the proof which he undertakes so earnestly and carries out with such precision, the absence of the first and most important link is in the highest degree suspicious. The only possible explanation is that the Apostle was ignorant of its existence. And this is important. For Paul's knowledge of these things must have come from the heads of the primitive Church. Therefore it is the primitive Church itself that was ignorant of any such tradition. And, still further, this tradition is directly negated by the fact that among the Christophanies recorded by Paul, that of Peter is absolutely the first. If the series of appearances which prove the resurrection began with Peter's experience, those at the grave which exclude Peter cannot have preceded it.

The events enumerated by Paul extend, undoubtedly, over a considerable period, and therefore prove more than the mere fact of the resurrection. They show that in thus appearing the risen Christ lived and wrought on behalf of His cause. We are, of course, right in assigning a definite limit to these manifestations; others which fall beyond the sphere thus defined, no longer belong for Paul to the same category. But our limit has nothing to do with the events at the grave. It is only determined by the

effect of the appearances. Those fall within it which result, no matter when or where, in establishing faith in the present life of Christ. Their import is shown by the fact that he includes among them his own experience, namely that of his call. Like it all these appearances, and finally that which he witnessed, initiated the Apostles into their work, founded their mission, and originated the Church. It is as the historical origins of the Church that they obtain their meaning and character. Here we have the oldest conception, the apostolic recollection of the Christophanies.

On the other hand, the appearances at the grave are empty and meaningless even in the oldest form in which they are given. They are a mere piece of display, and their only result is to point to something further, to the true appearance which was to take place in Galilee. This is enough to show that they are a later product of the legend. But they show us also its gradual advance, and its manifold development under the influence of ideas borrowed from other sources.

For us also it is their practical importance alone that makes these experiences historical and intelligible. Even when we grasp this fact there remains something which we cannot further explain. Here, as at the beginning of all greater religious movements, we are in presence of the absolute in its creative power; and the ultimate cause lies beyond the range of historical inquiry. It is a historical fact that the men of whom Paul tells us, and among whom he himself is included, were convinced that they had seen the risen Christ. At the same time they were certain that the conviction had taken possession of them, that it had not originated with themselves. They could find no explanation for it in their own thought. But no proof is to be got from this for a bodily Christophany.



§ 2. *The Christophanies.*

The manifestations to his predecessors, 1 Cor. xv. 4 ff., can only be understood by inferences from Paul's own experience. With regard to the latter we may leave almost entirely out of account the narratives in the Acts. That book describes Paul's conversion three times (ix. 3 ff., xxii. 6 ff., xxvi. 13 ff.); in the first instance in its place in the author's narrative, afterwards in two of the speeches attributed to Paul. All three passages present variations which, if of no great importance in themselves, yet show conclusively that we are not dealing with an actual tradition. The manner in which the writer treats his material proves that for him its importance lay, not in the accuracy with which it preserved the fact, but in its meaning. But in all these representations, whether the author tells the story, or makes Paul tell it in one or other of his speeches, he saw nothing but a dazzling flash of light; and he heard the voice of the Lord, precisely as great Jewish Rabbis in consecrated moments were enabled to see the light and hear the voice of God. That is enough for the author of the Acts, it was enough according to the ideas of the time to warrant the belief that the risen Christ had appeared to Paul. His own words presuppose something more. In the letter to the Galatians, i. 16, indeed, when he is telling of his conversion, he contents himself with giving its result, 'God revealed His Son in him.' He does not describe how the revelation was effected; it is enough that he knew it to be a revelation. But in First Corinthians, where he is enumerating the appearances of the risen Christ, he says more definitely, xv. 8, that Jesus appeared to him, 'was seen of him.' And in the same way, when in this letter, ix. 1, he is defending his equal right to be an Apostle, he establishes it by his experience: 'he had seen the Lord.' This seems to carry us beyond the mere flash of light; yet it does not prove the bodily appearance in the common sense of the words. When we come to consider what Paul understood by this 'seeing' of his, we must not, indeed, compare it with the vision of which

he tells us in 2 Cor. xii. 1 ff. The flights there mentioned into the third heaven and into paradise, of which he was ignorant whether he was in or out of the body, belong to a period and a kind of revelation in which he certainly does not include the vision that made him an Apostle. On the other hand, we are perfectly entitled to gauge this 'seeing' of the risen Christ by the views he held of the resurrection, and the nature of the risen Christ. In the Philippian letter, iii. 21, we learn that Christ has a glorious body. When He comes He shall transform believers, giving them also a glorious body. But He has not to wait for it till His return; it is His already. 'Christ is,' 1 Cor. xv. 20, 'the first fruits of them that are asleep, the leader and author of their resurrection;' now, however, they also will arise clothed anew with a wholly different body, whose attributes are incorruption, glory, and power, whose nature is comprehended in the notion of the spiritual body, xv. 42-44. Hence, by His resurrection, He is our forerunner, and it is in this that He is the heavenly man whose likeness we shall wear, v. 49. Therefore His resurrection, Rom. i. 4, belongs to a wholly different sphere from that of the flesh into which His earthly existence falls. It belongs to the sphere of the spirit of holiness. Therefore also from that point 'Christ lives no longer after the flesh,' 2 Cor. v. 16.

Now from this it does not yet indeed follow that if Paul saw the risen Christ he could only have seen, as in the Acts, a flash of light. But it proves conclusively that what he saw was only visible to his spirit. For nothing else existed than a spiritual nature, a spiritual body. Any other 'seeing' was therefore impossible. And, accordingly, every assumption that involves the perception of the material body in its original form falls to the ground. Unless we would contradict his most distinct declarations, we must not figure to ourselves as material what he saw in the spirit. From this it is also clear how lame is the contention, that because Paul ranked his own vision with that of Peter and the rest, and because, further, the earlier witnesses must have seen Christ in the flesh, therefore we are to conclude that he

also did so see Him. There is absolutely no proof that Paul presupposed a physical Christophany in the case of the older Apostles. Had he done so he could not have put his own experience on a level with theirs. But since he does this, we must conclude that he looked upon the visions of his predecessors in the same light as his own. The statement of the Apostle negatives not only sense perception, but also all intercourse with the Christ dependent upon the senses. It can only be a spiritual vision that is in question. But our review of the facts can only be confused by introducing the antithesis of vision and reality into the Apostle's thought. What Paul saw when Christ appeared to him was not a mere conception or imagination but a reality. The spiritual nature and the spiritual body were to him quite as real as the flesh and the material body. But for our historical estimate of the fact this very distinction is decisive. We ought not to ascribe to sense perception what the Apostle does not.

The existence in the Primitive Church of quite another conception of the Christophany is most readily explained by the ideas current in the Gospels of the return and appearance of the dead in general. Thus Herod and his courtiers expressed the opinion that Jesus was John the Baptist, or Elias, or another prophet returned from the dead. And when Jesus asked His disciples, 'Who do men say that I am?' they quoted similar opinions held by the people. According to this view a dead man returns, not only to show himself in the body, but also to live again, and to work for a time under earthly conditions. It is wholly immaterial what historical foundation, if any, these reports may have had. Their reception into the Gospels proves in any case that the conception was not unfamiliar in early Christian circles. And it forms the starting-point for our criticism of the cycle of narratives that clustered ever more and more thickly round the recollections vouched for by Paul. The first addition to the story was, certainly, the legend of the women who found the grave empty, and were taught its meaning by an angel. Then this grew into the report that Jesus had appeared to them, a report which did not

prevent them from retaining also their belief that all that had happened hitherto was merely introductory to the decisive appearance in Galilee. Precisely for this reason it was at first only the women who were permitted at the grave to convince themselves of what was the foundation of all that followed. It was the first step to an explanation and concrete presentment of the experiences of the disciples. But such a foundation was too slight for the men of later times. What they wished is shown us by the author of the Acts, when, x. 41, he makes Peter say, 'We did eat and drink with Him after He rose from the dead'—a mode of representing the risen Christ as impossible to Paul, as it was adapted to the craving of the mass for palpable facts. In this way were formed the narratives preserved for us in the Third and Fourth Gospels. The transference to Jerusalem of the Galilean experiences is closely related to this inner development of the legend. The proof of the bodily resurrection demanded its completion on the very spot where the event had taken place, and we can still discover in the narratives the different views that influenced the development of the evidence. The appearance to the disciples at Emmaus in Luke is still half ghostly; Christ is therefore not at once recognised, just as at the grave He had first to make Himself known. Therefore this appearance is followed by the second to the Apostles which removes the last doubt, since He lets them touch Him, and takes food before their eyes. The two appearances in Jerusalem of the Fourth Gospel follow the same order, so far as the sense is concerned; for here also He enters on the first occasion like a ghost through a closed door, but on the second, after doing so again, He adds the proof of His corporeality by permitting His body to be touched. And yet the narratives shrink to the last from carrying out these physical conceptions to their logical conclusion. They have found their way into Matthew's Gospel at least at one point, where, namely, the women in the neighbourhood of the grave, when they prostrate themselves, are represented as embracing Jesus' feet. But John's Gospel has corrected precisely this feature in the warning, only to be understood by its reference

to the earlier narrative, 'Touch Me not, for I am not yet ascended to the Father,' xx. 17. Since the latter Gospel goes on to describe in the very next narrative how He afterwards bids Thomas touch Him, we can only explain the prohibition by a theory peculiar to the evangelist, that by the ascension the body of Jesus first attained its new nature, and the state that made His complete manifestation possible. In any case we cannot fail to observe in this series of representations the mobility of the narratives, and the shifting influence of reflection. And the doubts repeatedly mentioned by the writers (Matt. xxviii. 17; Luke xxiv. 11, 37, 41; John xx. 25; the secrecy of the witnesses, Mark xvi. 8), give just so many indications of their gradual origin. The last layer of tradition, the appendix of Galilean histories in John xxi., with its allegorical draught of fishes elsewhere assigned in a different form to the beginning of Jesus' Ministry, only shows in its main points how at last warrant and information were sought in mysterious and hitherto undivulged words of the risen Christ, for all manner of events or aspirations that in the future agitated the minds of men. And it shows, further, how the attempt took their thoughts back to Galilee.

Now it is especially remarkable that the experience of Peter, the event which, according to Paul, was the first and the basis of all the rest, is for a long time entirely absent from the history, and though adduced later never obtains its rightful prominence in the Gospels. Neither our Matthew nor our Mark is aware that Jesus appeared first to Peter. The only hint given by Mark of his peculiar position in this matter is the slight one, that the message of the angel intrusted to the women at the grave, while sent to the disciples generally, is especially directed to him. Luke (xxiv. 34) is the earliest to record the appearance to Peter as the first, but its mention in the form of a report shows undoubtedly that the statement depended on the writer's acquaintance with the passage in Paul. He had nothing to make a narrative of. Even the Fourth Gospel only states that Peter was the first to convince himself of the grave being empty, not, therefore, that Jesus had appeared to him.



Afterwards, in the appendix to the Fourth Gospel, he does indeed see Jesus. But there Peter is not alone; besides, Christ has already appeared twice to all the disciples. Even here, therefore, the divergence from Paul is absolute. It is impossible to imagine a more convincing proof that the history was entirely supplanted by legend. So strong was the tendency, that the reverence for Peter, in other respects one of the most powerful motives of the older narrative, could not prevail against it. Peter's actual experience was no longer sufficient. It could not be pressed into the service of the prevailing belief, and the reflections of the succeeding age.

In these circumstances we must at the outset abandon all hope of being any longer able to follow in the entanglements of the later narratives the traces of the various Christophanies, arranged by Paul in so definite an order, and with such an evident intention of securing absolute completeness. Here is his list:—I. to Peter; II. to the twelve; III. to more than 500 brethren at once; IV. to James; V. to all the apostles; VI. to Paul. Of these six events, apart from the appearance to Peter, and the last mentioned, that to Paul himself, the Gospels have also lost sight of the appearance to James, nor is there any reference to it in the Acts. Nor can we find in these writings any hint of the 500 brethren cited by Paul in the third place. Our comparison is thus limited to the twelve under the second, and 'all the apostles' under the fifth heading. But 'all the apostles' we need not look for in the Acts or Gospels, if only because of the date. They appear towards the end of Paul's list, immediately before his own experience, while the Gospels and the Acts only contain appearances that took place in the early days, unless we are willing to suppose a wider range for John xxi. But, apart from the date, there is the question as to the personality of the witnesses; for 'all the apostles' are in Paul distinguished from the twelve, while the narratives do not extend beyond the latter. Therefore we are left simply with the appearance to the twelve. But who will say whether our comparison should take into account the event reported by Matthew as having occurred on the mountain in Galilee, or one of the



stories told by Luke and John of Jesus' entrance into the room in Jerusalem? We can point to one fact alone in full agreement with what may be gathered from Paul's account, a fact that has held its ground in spite of other changes as a piece of genuine history. The appearance of Jesus to His followers was synonymous with the summons to promote His cause, with the reception of their calling and their mission. This is the one fact that pervades the whole narrative in Matthew, Luke, and John.

In view then of the condition of these manifold and contradictory narratives, we must admit that we can have no precise knowledge of the course of events. Our only genuinely historical source, the words of Paul, does not supply the want. One thing alone is firmly established, that a momentary experience convinced the disciples that Jesus lived and was in their midst. This fact, a fact of their faith, is all that history has to tell us. And the circumstance that three of these Christophanies were witnessed at once by a large body of men, first by twelve, then five hundred, and finally by an indefinite number, only proves that this spiritual vision, like other effects of a great religious impulse, could occur to a community, and might under certain conditions pass from one individual to another. Without some such hypothesis it would be difficult to conceive the corporate possession of spiritual graces in the congregations of the earliest times.

The separate events enumerated by Paul were without doubt related to each other in a causal series, and started from one initial impulse. Peter began the great movement. At a later point a new epoch may be referred to James, if only because he in his turn precedes a number in Paul's summary. That list indicates clearly enough the kind of movement, that, starting from a centre, continued in wider and wider rings. Peter's experience became that of his companions, first in a narrower, then in a wider circle. Then it laid hold of one man in particular who perhaps had hitherto stood aloof, no enemy like Paul in after days, but certainly no believer as Peter had been. But this man, the brother of Jesus, exerted a great influence, the influence of his birth. It is

remarkable that in the list he is followed by 'all the Apostles.' That this is not a second reference to the twelve is self-evident from the change of name and the prominence given to the word 'all,' but the occurrence of these titles side by side sheds a new light on the apostolate. James could not enter into the number of the twelve, yet he was their equal, and an Apostle as really as they. The limitation of the apostleship to the twelve soon passed for the most part away, and perhaps it was James's admission that gave the first impulse to the wider conception. In any case the whole body of the Apostles could no longer be identified with the company of the twelve.

### § 3. *Peter.*

The fact that Peter was the first to behold the risen Christ is historically the best-attested point in all this obscure period. But it is eminently historical, since to it the movement owed its fresh origin, and Peter's position in history is especially explained by it. He was unquestionably the first man in the Primitive Church. When Paul was converted to Christianity, he first settled everything in spirit and alone with Him who had called him. He felt that he must be independent, must shape his calling without human help. But after all was clear to him, he sought, as was natural, to come into touch with the primitive Church. Yet not with the whole community; apart from any other reason circumstances rendered that impossible. It was enough for him to meet with Peter. For this purpose alone he went up to Jerusalem. He was anxious to make the acquaintance of the man in whom he saw the whole of contemporary Christianity. The importance of Peter had been already recognised by the Master Himself, by whom he had certainly been distinguished beyond all his companions. It is just as certain that he preserved his pre-eminence, since he has maintained his position not only in a false tradition, but so far as we can see in history itself. But the source of this undisputed predominance, both in the earliest times and consequently in the further course of events, is to be found in the nature of the

Church's origin. He was all-important for its beginning, he was himself the beginning. He who first saw the Lord, who kindled and spread the faith in him, whose own experience became that of his companions, was and could not but be head. His whole personal importance consists in this fact; without it there would have been no Church; it cannot be rated too highly. In it the divine and human were so closely united that our thought involuntarily has recourse to the idea of a revelation. The experience appeared to consciousness so wholly divine that it roused the whole energy, the entire unconditioned will. And it derived from the belief in its divine origin the power to develop into a great spiritual movement, which went on creating and working in like fashion.

The statement of Paul is sufficient to show that Peter, as well as he himself, regarded Christ's appearance as celestial. And this view is also directly confirmed by the circumstance that his experience disappeared from memory, or at least from tradition, after men no longer sought to prove a heavenly, but an earthly manifestation. With this inference, however, we must rest content. Peter's views regarding the matter are not known to us in the same way as Paul's. There is only one way of arriving at least at some degree of probability. We may turn to the oldest tradition of Jesus' teaching, a safe enough guide to the thoughts current in early Christian circles. Now there can be no doubt that, according to this tradition, the souls of the pious were believed to live in a new kind of body, a body of an essentially heavenly quality. This is expressed in Jesus' answer to the question of the Sadducees about marriage, 'They shall there be as the Angels of God.' This is in fact their resurrection. To the same effect is also the tradition that, as regards belief in a future state, Jesus and His followers were on the side of the Pharisees. Besides, we can refer here to the story of the Transfiguration, an incident exclusively designed to show Jesus transformed at this particular moment, even in His earthly life, into a heavenly form of light. The only possible inference is, that

Jesus, when He should appear after death, would do so in such a form. Of course He was still visible in the radiance, but at the same time His exaltation transcended the crudely material form of the manifestation. And we may well regard it as an important feature of the narrative, that he who had been rebuked because he could not reconcile himself to the thought of Jesus' sufferings, was here also reprov'd for at first interpreting the appearance as material. The same idea has found a further development in the account given by the Acts of the ascension.

The whole significance of Peter's experience appears in the clearest light, when we add that a prophecy of His resurrection, said to have come from Jesus, is proved by a number of details in our Gospels themselves to be unhistorical. It was remembered as late as the Third and Fourth Gospels that this declaration, which was then of course known and repeated, had at first been unintelligible to the disciples, and that they had only later given the interpretation afterwards current to the words that were held to relate to the resurrection. And when they began to tell how the grave had been found empty, and even how Christ had appeared in its neighbourhood, this trait still held its ground, and it was also told that everything had happened without being in the least expected by the disciples. Another prophecy, that in which Jesus said that He would come to found the Kingdom of Heaven, is on quite a different footing. This is so essential, so integral a portion of the oldest tradition, that if we are to exclude every declaration of the sort we must renounce all certainty that we possess in it any genuine words of Jesus. But instead of failing like the other to win acceptance, it struck its roots deep into the minds of the hearers. It set the disciples reflecting, and asking what their lot was to be in the new Kingdom, what reward and exaltation they were to hope for. We may indeed say that, even during the life of Jesus, this hope formed the kernel of their faith and of their higher convictions. It was essentially this belief that transformed the company of scholars, the adherents of a prophet, into the faithful devotees of the Messiah, and there-

fore the nucleus of a new Church. This fact stands by itself, and it does not matter whether they, at an early date, or ever, received or adopted a definite prediction of the death of Jesus. For the expectation that He would thus appear and bring His Kingdom could attach itself to the conception of a sudden transformation at the required time. For this very reason the hope did nothing to prevent the deep dejection by which the disciples were overcome at the death of Jesus. It had not necessarily implied that this future would be preceded by His death, least of all by such a death. We may, therefore, assume that Peter certainly shared in the expectation. But if so, then the whole importance of Jesus' appearance was summed up for him in the fact that it had confirmed this belief, or, rather, that it had renewed it after its overthrow at the crucifixion. Over all the horror of that dreadful fate there triumphed the belief that the Crucified would yet come as He had promised in the glory of the Father. He lived, He already lived, in the celestial form in which He was to return. He did not yet reveal Himself in this form to the world; the time had not yet come; but He was revealed to the believer. And by His appearance He gave them the pledge of the impending return.

But this revelation made Peter absolutely certain of his own duty. It was his call, not merely to wait, but to work; nay, it directed him to the place where he had stood with the Lord before the crash came. The more certain it became that the future was assured, and that the kingdom would soon be established, the more powerful grew the impulse to fulfil his own mission and to assemble the Church which was to enter the kingdom. The movement checked by the violence done to the Lord must be resumed, the work then interrupted must be completed. His own path was clearly indicated by the last days, the last actions of Jesus Himself. This is a sufficient explanation why he did not remain in Galilee. Jesus Himself had opened up the new way by His march into Jerusalem. He had gone there neither to deliver Himself up to the executioner, nor on the other hand to celebrate



the Passover. These purposes were both alike negatived by His energetic bearing as He entered the city, and by the picture, so full of hope, which it left in the memories of His companions. Everything pointed to a great resolve, a bold venture, a fixed intention. The time had come to challenge a decision in the heart of the people, for it was to the people as a whole that the invitation to enter the kingdom was addressed. Here must His cause be decided, here must the demand to believe on Him be proclaimed. And thus the disciple's task was set. His Master had been slain, but his conviction had only grown the stronger, that in a short time He would reappear in His true form and complete all things. The respite granted to the nation had been shortened. The Lord had therefore bequeathed to His faithful followers the continuance of His work on its behalf. The remnant must be saved, the dispersed must, as far as possible, be gathered together. In this way the Galileans were directed to leave the home to which they had fled and to go to Jerusalem. In this way, when, for the second time, the Church sprang into life, Peter became its head, the leader of his brethren, the captain in the new crusade. In the rapidity of all this, the breathless succession of events, we discern the greatness, the marvellous character of the movement. Yet only in this way was it possible. Only from the depths of pain and despair could faith uplift its head and reappear with the power of a revelation. Only in these first few days could the courage, the enthusiasm, reawaken with which these men had accompanied their Lord into Jerusalem. It was no result of prolonged reflection or deliberate resolve. It was an immediate force that created in them the conviction that it had been given from without, and had therefore been irresistibly appointed to its sphere of action.

The conviction that the resurrection of Jesus meant His departure to heaven, until He should return and complete the kingdom, had thus an immeasurable practical effect. But that was not all. The faith in Jesus also underwent a change. In His lifetime His followers had learned to look upon Him as the



Messiah of God. In this sense He was called not only Son of David, but also Son of Man, and Son of God. But this does not imply any conception of His nature inconsistent with His being merely human. What was extraordinary in His actions was throughout ascribed to the agency of the Spirit of God who accompanied Him. The belief that His descent was natural long continued to hold its ground. It showed itself in the compilation of the genealogical tree, which itself belongs to the second generation, and in the unhesitating mention of His father, Matt. xiii. 55. Not even the doctrine that He had been conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, a doctrine which, although it originated in another age, yet arose as the final result of the thought of His equipment with the Spirit, could displace the older view of His parentage. Nevertheless the person of Jesus was viewed after the resurrection in a new light. The Jesus, who had been received into heaven and who lived there, was only now completely proved to be the heaven-sent Messiah. And although this did not yet imply His pre-existence, still it was impossible to separate the form of the earthly, and that of the present heavenly life in the conception of His Person. The latter reflected its light on all the memories of the former. Here we have the starting-point for the belief that ended in the doctrine of Christ's superhuman nature. Paul was the first, so far as we know, clearly to follow out this path. But he did not do so in opposition to the original Apostles. On this point there was no dispute.

## CHAPTER II

### THE EXTENSION OF THE CHURCH

#### § 1. *The External Position*

WE cannot say how soon it was after the death of Jesus that His Galilean disciples returned to Jerusalem. The Acts does not help us, because it has lost all recollection of the departure to Galilee. It mentions indeed that, in the earliest times, they were called Galileans (i. 11, ii. 7), but Galileans they were in any case. One point the writer has kept hold of: while he represents them as living at first in Jerusalem, it is in concealment. And for this reason their public career demanded a marvellous opening, which takes place on Pentecost. If we retain this date, then the return must have taken place after a few weeks, a supposition that there is nothing to contradict. In any case it cannot have been long delayed.

With this to guide us we may determine the date of the origin of the Church by the year of Jesus' death. For the latter we have Pilate's ten years of office closing with the year 35. Within this period we have no absolutely certain date, yet we may at all events follow the opinion of Luke and John, who, on the whole, give us a fairly reliable chronology, and thus we are brought down to the year 30. But when we find later that the persecution which began with Stephen, and therefore the conversion of Paul, cannot be put later than 35, our conclusions are quite consistent. At the later date the original Apostles were in Jerusalem, Gal. i. 18. The strength of the Church may be judged by the fact, that

it had not only secured a strong position in the capital, and grown capable of weathering a violent storm, but that it had already extended beyond Judæa into Syria. This entrenchment and expansion required at all events such a period of several years as is given by our two dates.

The history given in the Acts of the earliest years agrees, so far as the Church in Jerusalem is concerned, with the above result. It, however, plainly puts its extension in Judæa somewhat later; it makes it begin with the persecution brought on by Stephen, viii. 1. But the picture sketched in this book of the earliest period in Jerusalem aims, above all things, at unity, and for that reason is confined to the capital. Everything takes place in Jerusalem, and the clearness of the narrative with its well-rounded outline is eminently adapted to influence us unduly in its favour.

For forty days after the death of Jesus the Apostles enjoyed His companionship in Jerusalem. Then He gives them His final command, not to inquire into the time of the Consummation of the Kingdom, but to rest quietly in the city, and first to wait until the Holy Spirit shall come to them, 'that they may be His witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judæa and Samaria, and in the uttermost parts of the earth.' After this they are permitted to see Him vanish in the clouds, and receive further the assurance that 'He will return in the same manner.' They return, however, from the Mount of Olives to the city, where they form a small community holding their meetings in a private house. The little Church consists, in the first place, of the Twelve, of Mary, the mother of Jesus, and other women, and of the brothers of Jesus, but in all, it already embraces ten times the number of the Apostles, *i.e.* one hundred and twenty members. That the new order may be quite regular, the gap in the apostolic college, made by the treachery of Judas, has to be filled up, and Matthias is chosen in his place. Then on Pentecost the event already prophesied occurs: the Holy Ghost descends upon them amid visible signs, and the effect is to set them all speaking in foreign

languages. But all this takes place so that the Apostles now step at once into publicity. The storm-sign is heard in Jerusalem, and all the inhabitants rush to the spot. The crowd are astonished at the miracle of tongues, and when Peter seizes the opportunity of speaking to them, in order to convince them that Jesus was really the Messiah, the effect is so great that three thousand converts accept baptism and are received into the Church. Thus a new era is begun, in which the Church impresses its spirit on the customs of their common social life, and is steadily increased in numbers. Its whole life and action, meanwhile, are open and public, if only because of the miracles wrought by the Apostles. These are witnessed by every one. They produce a holy awe, and the whole multitude are attracted to the community, whose life presents them with so edifying a pattern.

This is the first picture. What follows up to the appointment of the deacons and the appearance of Stephen is in perfect harmony with it. Twice indeed danger threatens, first, some of the Apostles, afterwards, the whole body. But there is no intention of introducing by either of these events the history of the persecution. That begins with Stephen. Only short-lived attacks and hindrances occur, and these are simply calculated to show how the community is conceived to have advanced irresistibly, to have increased in extent, and to have developed its resources. First, Peter, in company with John, publicly heals a lame beggar in front of the Temple, and thus gets an opportunity of again delivering an evangelistic address to the astonished people. As a result the two Apostles are imprisoned; but only at the instigation of the Sadducees, whose sole objection is to the declaration of Christ's resurrection and the consequent propagation of the belief in a future state. Their action, in turn, causes Peter to repeat his address in the Sanhedrim itself. That body, however, does not venture to take any steps against the Apostles. It is content with warning them to desist from preaching, and though they refuse to give any promise, they are set free. The Church celebrates their escape with a hymn of praise. The Holy Ghost descends once more

upon them, and they speak with greater boldness than ever. Their noble institution, the community of goods, along with the powerful preaching of the Apostles, strengthens the disposition of the populace in their favour. And when the first impure element enters the community, and a lie is attempted by a contributor to its objects, Peter's exercise of authority, and the word by which he strikes the guilty dead, not only purify the Church, but overshadow its members and all who hear of the affair with fear. Thus the continued advance is once more secured. Those who do not join the Church do not venture to force their way into its meetings, but observe it from afar with reverence. Many, however, become actual members, and still more at least bring their sick to be healed by Peter. On the other hand indeed the Sadducees renew their intrigues, and a second time they succeed through their influence with the higher priesthood. On this occasion all the Apostles are put in prison. Yet no bolts or bars can hold them. They are miraculously delivered by an angel, and, as in a triumph, they enter the temple and resume their teaching. So strong is the disposition of the people in their favour that the magistrates do not dare to arrest them formally. They are merely induced to appear voluntarily before the Sanhedrim, where again they decline to obey. In the council the strong dislike to them is suppressed in deference to the prudent and cautious advice of Gamaliel. The great Pharisee is represented as saying that perhaps God was indeed supporting their cause, and in that case nothing would succeed in checking it. Accordingly the Sanhedrim is content with inflicting corporal punishment, and with again imposing silence upon them. But they are not cast down; only the more powerfully do they continue to proclaim the gospel.

This is the picture given in the Acts of the first years of the primitive Church. The history therein contained reaches as far as the persecution that began with Stephen, and therefore nearly up to the date of Paul's conversion—in other words, to about the year 35. One very simple consideration supports the truth of the picture in one of its main features, viz., that the community



enjoyed in its earliest period a certain measure of peace and toleration. If it had not, it could not have attained the proportions or strength presupposed by the persecution witnessed to by Paul. Unless it had become strong, it would neither have been the object of persecution nor been capable of withstanding it. It is, besides, far from difficult to explain how such an interval of peace was possible. The most essential condition of peace was certainly present. The early Church was faithful to the law; on that side it gave no offence; indeed, its adherents could very well be distinguished by genuine Jewish piety. If the magistrates were not unacquainted with them, yet they had sufficient grounds in such circumstances to limit themselves meanwhile to a policy of observation and surveillance. Besides being correct in this main feature, the Acts rightly places Peter and John at the head of the Church, leaving James as yet unmentioned. But we have still to ask whether the rest of the representation corresponds with the actual position of matters.

We do not know with any certainty from what source the author of the Acts—who himself lived long after the events he describes—has taken his materials. If he used a source it cannot be indicated in his text. The narrative is too much of a piece and too smooth for that. Even the recurrence of general descriptions (i. 14, ii. 42-47, iv. 32-35, v. 12-16, 42) does not point to anything of the sort, for it is involved in the thought and purpose of the writer. The choice of Matthias, Pentecost, the imprisonments, the Ananias incident, with the counter sketch of Barnabas, the main features of the life of the community, the localities as, for instance, the beautiful gate (iii. 2) and Solomon's porch (iii. 11), and, finally, the intervention of Gamaliel, at first suggest themselves as distinct traditions. But the narrative contains a whole number of traits and assumptions which are evidently freely sketched, and are even, in part, inconsistent with history. And these features frequently depend precisely on those main portions which otherwise we would have been disposed to accept. The figures that represent the growth of the community—120, 3000,

5000 (i. 15, ii. 41, iv. 4), until we come to the indefinite multitudes—are all artificial. The history of the forty days (i. 3) is marked in the same way by its typical number. It belongs to the period when the legends of the resurrection underwent their latest modification, since it reveals, as its leading idea, the desire to gain time for a more advanced instruction of the Apostles in the life of Jesus, and consequently for their preparation to receive the spirit. Into the narrative of Matthias' election is woven the drawn-out legend of the end of Judas. Of the account of the miracle at Pentecost it is impossible to form any clear conception. It is clearly an imitation of the symbolical legends told by the Jews of the proclamation of the law; and it represents the speech with tongues in a way that is contradicted by the actual history of the gift, and is not consistently maintained by the author himself in the sequel. Of the miraculous cures, the very first, the story of the lame man, is very similar to the analogous traditions in the Gospels, but the whole of the narratives are quite manifestly parallel to the corresponding passages in the evangelists, and especially to those that show most of the legend in their colouring. The story of the execution of Ananias and Sapphira by means of the word corresponds, of course, to the idea, that he who is excommunicated must perish bodily, but it can lay no claim to be considered historical. Gamaliel's attitude is not indeed in itself out of keeping with the situation or with the character of the man; but his words contain such manifest errors on the part of the historian, that all historical foundation must be denied them. From this single example we are entitled to lay down the opinion that, at least so far as this portion of the book is concerned, the author of the Acts has freely invented such speeches. Of less consequence are the self-contradictions in the description of the inner life of the Church, especially the obscure representation of the community of goods. After all this, there is but little left from which to construct a genuine history of the period.

Still more important than any of the doubts urged against separate details is the result of an examination to which the

author's general conception of the whole position may be subjected. This conception is by no means restricted to the thought that in the beginning there was a period of seclusion and peace, during which the Church was permitted quietly to grow and gather strength. His view is presented in quite other and, in fact, strongly exaggerated colours. The incidents are set forth in the strongest light. After Pentecost the Apostles deliver their addresses publicly in presence of the whole city; universal excitement is at once caused by the sight and report of their miracles; even the private life of the community is exposed to public view; and, finally, the Church enjoys general reverence, expressed partly in a natural awe and reserve, but partly also in a passionate partisanship, which rises to such a height that the people threaten violence to any one who should venture to lay hands on the Christians. It is as if Church and Apostles were constantly exhibited and recognised by the whole of Judaism as the true saints, the kernel of the people; they enjoy universal reverence. Such an aspect this period might naturally assume when viewed afar off by a man who believed that his Church had come forth as the true Israel from Judaism; and who, for the practical purposes of his apology, sought to represent that Church as the genuine and approved Judaism, who, in short, idealised the early time as a whole in every possible way. An origin of this sort is historically impossible. It would require us to assume that the condemnation and execution of Jesus had been carried out by the authorities in direct opposition to the views of the multitude, and that the mass of the people now atoned for the wrong that had been committed by the sympathy which they, at least, showed to the followers of Christ. But such a supposition is not only destitute of foundation, it is not even present to the mind of the author of the Acts, for he rather looks upon this whole movement in favour of Christianity as something entirely new. But even if such a movement were at all conceivable, it would certainly have been speedily suppressed. It would have at once rendered toleration impossible. The authorities could not have afforded to spare the

followers of the Crucified, or to wait for further action on their part. And for this very reason, on the other hand, the appearance of the Apostles in such a fashion as would have been tantamount to a direct challenge is also impossible. At this point the writer has clearly in view the example of Jesus when He entered Jerusalem and appeared in the Temple. He makes His disciples appear in the same way; only he substitutes a lasting success for the passing excitement, that had in the earlier instance sprung up among the people. But as certainly as the disciples had adopted the Master's aim, so certainly they could not have carried it out in this way. Now, the author of the Acts was clear-sighted enough not to be blind to this difficulty, and he has explained it in his own fashion. He shows how it was possible for all this to be permitted in Jerusalem, how the Sanhedrim could at first calmly look on, and afterwards be content with half measures. According to his explanation, it was only a small party which took umbrage at the cause. It was only the Sadducees who disapproved, not because they objected to the whole movement, but because they were suspicious lest at this conjuncture, when the Apostles, namely, spoke of Jesus having risen from the dead, the belief in a future state would be strengthened. At the time they had, of course, influence enough with the higher priesthood to induce the Sanhedrim to take steps, but just because it was a mere party matter, and no common ground, no comprehensive motive existed, their attempt was ineffectual. The refusal of the Pharisees to support them is indicated in the attitude of Gamaliel. But this expedient of the historian is as untenable as the situation itself which he has sketched. If the Sadducees attached no belief to the resurrection of the dead, yet it was characteristic of the party not to prosecute others for any such reason. They were not intolerant dogmatists, but clever politicians and ecclesiastics. If they entered the lists against the apostolic community, it was certainly on other grounds; it was because they desired to stave off all unrest and cause of offence. On the other hand, the Pharisees cannot have favoured the Christian Church. We would

have to abandon the whole of our best evangelic tradition before we could ignore the fact that they were the chief opponents of Jesus and His cause. How should this have changed all at once? However blameless the conduct of the Apostles may have been in relation to the demands of the law, still the Pharisees could not have now suffered the name of Him who had just been crucified to be publicly proclaimed. But, above all, there is one fact which, indisputable as it is, overturns the whole structure. Paul (or Saul) was a Pharisee, and as a Pharisee he persecuted.

### § 2. *The Promulgation of the Gospel.*

We are not, however, entirely destitute of authorities, when we seek to depict these early times historically. The most important has been preserved for us in the oldest Gospel tradition. It is impossible to doubt that Jesus Himself selected twelve of His disciples and appointed them to preach His gospel: they were to take precedence and act as leaders to the rest. These twelve, as we learn from Paul, existed and were recognised after His death. They seem to have been very unlike in character. Only a few succeeded in maintaining later on a prominent position and influence. Others passed away without making any mark. In appointing them, Jesus' one immediate object was probably realised in the symbolical meaning of the number and in the body as a whole. The number points to the mission being directed to the whole of Israel. He therefore said that they would judge the twelve tribes; the judgment being determined by the reception of the mission. When the deeds of Jesus were being recorded, it was also recollected that He had given them this mission. The narrative then went on to relate, that Jesus sent them out in the time of His own labours, to preach independently in His name, and that they afterwards returned to Him with a report of their proceedings. But this narrative is quite isolated: no second journey follows the first: afterwards as before



they are constantly in His company, and, in fact, they show themselves utterly incapable as yet of independent action. An attempt made by them on one occasion wholly fails, and calls forth a stern reproof from Jesus. They themselves consider it quite unwarrantable for any one to separate from the suite of Jesus, and to act by himself in His name. But not only so, the instructions given them by Jesus, in forming that first and only commission of which mention has been made, do not suit the period assigned to them. They contain directions adapted to another set of conditions. They are conceived with reference to their independent vocation, as it existed for them only after the death of Jesus. Even in the short form given by Mark and Luke, they receive instructions, at least as to their public appearances, which at that time were a matter of course, since they could not present themselves in any other way than that which they had learned and been accustomed to in the company of Jesus. Matthew's Gospel has retained these instructions, but has supplemented and extended them by other sayings regarding the behaviour of the emissaries and the destinies awaiting them. It is quite certain that in this version we have a description of the mission of the apostolic period, the oldest Palestinian mission. And therefore it is here that we find the picture of the mission as it actually existed, a sketch developed directly from contemporary and living observation.

In place of those ceremonial and public preachings in Jerusalem, we have, according to this view, an activity of a wholly different character, not limited to Jerusalem, but carried out in journeys throughout the land. Nothing was to burden them on their travels, nothing to facilitate their obtaining rest. Without gold, or provision, without change of clothing, they set out, dependent entirely on the hospitality which received the wanderer, and which was at the same time to open the door for the entrance of the word. The only difference in opinion was whether the wanderer's staff was permitted or denied them, whether they were wont to go barefoot or shod with sandals. They entered the house with the

salutation 'Peace.' The greeting readily led to its explanation. They told that the Kingdom of Heaven was coming, that it was at hand, and required the assembling of the people; they called for repentance. Where their word found an entrance they tarried, and started a church in the house, as the beginning of a further enterprise. The work was carried on in perfect privacy. They uttered the word in the ear and in darkness, in the faith that of itself it would come to the light, and find its way (Matt. v. 14-16, x. 26; Mark iv. 22; Luke viii. 17, xii. 2 f.). Only after success began to be achieved, and the cause had attained publicity, did this saying receive a different application, one suited to the new conditions and the courage these demanded. Then it was taken no longer to mean: what was hidden becomes of itself conspicuous, or, what ye have said in darkness will be heard in broad daylight, and, what ye have whispered in the ear will be proclaimed on the housetops; but, what I have said to you in darkness, ye shall utter in the daytime, and what ye have heard in the ear, that shall ye declare on the housetops (Matt. x. 27). But there was a time when they had begun by secretly declaring their message in the rooms of private houses. When the word found entrance, then they had to prove its power by their authority over evil spirits, and by healing the sick like the Master. For the wanderers their task permitted no rest. Often enough the greeting of peace was not accepted, and the word was disdained. Then they hastened on, shaking the dust from their feet. It was their mission to travel through the whole land, to offer salvation everywhere, and to invite the whole Jewish people, the cities of Israel, from the first to the last, to enter the Kingdom. They followed no path that led to a heathen town, they entered no city of the Samaritans, they went only to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. This household they sought to assemble. And therefore we soon find Christians in the Jewish Joppa and in the predominantly Jewish Lydda, but not in Cæsarea (Acts ix. 32-36, x. 23). When they were expelled from one city, they entered the next: they made haste, for they could not but fear that their work

would be still unaccomplished when their Lord came. Thus they discharged the duty which the Lord had assigned to them when He chose His disciples, and determined of set purpose that they should be twelve in number. But this mission, we are certain, did not remain confined to the twelve. The sending forth of seventy other disciples during Jesus' lifetime, an incident recorded by Luke (x. 1), is of course in this precise form not historical. The narrative is of late origin, and there is no trace of it in our older authorities. But it must be understood as supplementary to the sending of the twelve. It has grown out of the fact, that not only these, but also a great number of other disciples had entered on this wanderer's path with the gospel tidings. It cannot mean that they were sent to the Gentiles. The number leads us much more naturally to think of the seventy elders of Israel. That Luke adds to the first twelve messengers a further expedition of seventy is consistent with the spirit which leads him in the Acts to apply imposing figures to his rapid succession of stages in the expansion of the Church. He misplaces, however, the natural development which took place in the early Church, and assigns it, along with his account of its origin, to the history of Jesus Himself.

It cannot be doubted that the work was now carried on in Jerusalem in exactly the same manner as in this earliest period it was conducted here and there throughout the country. In the capital, as well as in the provinces, the beginning is not described by the words that the gospel was proclaimed in the daytime and from the housetops, but that it was uttered in the dark and in whispers. Yet here also there were houses that soon were won, and in these houses the believers assembled. But the obstacles must in any case have been greatest precisely in Jerusalem. Apprehension of the authorities weighed upon the movement. Great cities are less disposed to expect marvels, and Jerusalem was a great city. Still the Galileans entrenched themselves here in secret, and the whole work was conducted from the capital. The legitimate leaders, the pillars as they were afterwards called,

Peter and John, had made it their home, and to keep hold of this central position was quite as important a part of their task as the work in the length and breadth of the country.

The path of these first ambassadors of the gospel was a path of self-sacrifice, courage, and saintly devotion. The promise of the Master, that they would never need to take thought beforehand of their words, was fulfilled hourly. The spirit on whom they depended did not fail them. Their resolute conduct was, however, inspired by the conviction that it depended on the confession they should make, whether they on their part would be recognised on the impending Day of Judgment. And they knew how Jesus had said, 'he who received them received Himself.' By this word they were supported. Their strength lay in their faith in Him and in His Coming.

### § 3. *The Doctrine.*

The Instructions to the Apostles for their journey contain nothing further concerning the doctrine which they were to deliver to the Jews. That the Kingdom of Heaven is approaching, was the gospel which they had to offer. This glad message they delivered; it was an offer, a disclosure by which men were won, as at every genuine inauguration and revival of religion. But, like John the Baptist and Jesus Himself, they also demanded repentance,—in other words, they called upon their hearers to prepare to receive the promise by a renewal of their mind. Our authorities did not require to expand the demand at this point of the onward movement. They took for granted what was comprehended in it, for they had often reported it as a saying of Jesus. And the time had come for the saying to be applied. But it was necessary to impart another doctrine, which did not thus lie ready to their hand. Their absolute faith in the Kingdom depended on their belief in the Messiah, and rested therefore on a second conviction, viz., that Jesus was the Christ. They had learned this truth from

Himself. It was the impression made by His personality, the influence of His words, the power of His spirit, that, in moments of exaltation, as well as during a continuous intercourse and under the test of everyday life, created their faith. This real experience which, as eye-witnesses and disciples, they had gained for themselves, they could relate to their hearers, but they could not impart it. Something was required to take the place of intuition. They had now to furnish proof of what they said, and their proof could only be taken from the source that above all else was convincing to their hearers, in other words, from the sacred writings. Thus arose the first Christian theology. The wants of the time created it, and made it inevitable that it should arise, and it is therefore as old as these wants themselves. And there was, if we may say so, an element of violence in its creation, because the faith that was desired could only be produced by the removal of the offence given to the hearers by the conception of a crucified Messiah. The disciples were able to meet this offence with their testimony to His resurrection. But even this could only find acceptance if their report agreed with holy writ, if the event followed as a consequence from the word. Thus, in fact, even in the preaching of Paul, the proof that He must die according to the Scriptures, and that He must rise again from the dead the third day according to the Scriptures, took precedence of all the accounts of His appearance after the resurrection. Here we have the beginning of this theology, the foundation of all that the Apostles proclaimed.

Still we can refer to all this so far as to obtain from it a picture also of the inner side of this earliest missionary movement. In the first place we have the conception of the Gospel itself. It was not enough merely to say that the kingdom of heaven was at hand, merely to give new life to the universal expectation of the Jews; it was necessary to purify, and to give a distinct form to the hope, and therefore to say, what the kingdom of heaven was. For both these purposes nothing more was necessary than to fall back upon the expressions of Jesus Himself. Matthew's Gospel has in the Sermon on the Mount brought together the



motives of the new life, in a section the kernel of which is preserved also by Luke, and certainly belongs to the purest tradition of the words of Jesus. This is the exhortation to escape from all entanglements, to become free from anxiety and care about their material life, in order to devote their minds wholly and sincerely to the kingdom and the righteousness of God (Matt. vi. 19-34; Luke xii. 22-34). In the same Sermon on the Mount, however, we have also the description, quite as certainly genuine in its main lines, of the nature of the kingdom; there the description forms the introduction to the whole discourse, Matt. v. 3 ff. The eight beatitudes give the simplest and grandest explanation of all their hopes. Blessing and comfort, the mercy of God and being filled with His righteousness, to see God and to be called sons of God:—here we have the future kingdom of heaven, the description of its treasures, the exhaustive statement of its whole nature. We can no longer say whether these beatitudes were ever uttered by Jesus in the complete form and connection in which we now find them. But their combination belongs originally to the apostolic tradition, since it is only as a whole that the group fulfils the object for which it was intended. In Luke vi. 20 ff., the sayings receive a different application, being employed to comfort the poor, and a strong light is shed upon this comfort by the woe pronounced upon the rich, who enjoy life. But it can hardly be doubted that this is already a secondary application of the words, suggested by the definite relations and wants of the community. The earliest apostolic representation can scarcely have been founded on this harsh contrast. Yet the original number has been preserved by Luke in the grouping of the parallels, where again we have four and four.

The expositions of the nature of the kingdom naturally include, again, the great central conditions which assign it in general and chiefly to the disposition of its members. But further instruction and direction were necessary for life, and the first and most important point was, naturally, that faith in the kingdom was to make no change in the existing order of public affairs. For



although the gospel was an invitation to enter the kingdom at once, yet, in its actual form, the kingdom was only preparatory, and pointed to its completion in the future. The changed order would then be made manifest for the first time. Accordingly the more clearly the directions for the present life were limited to a short period, the more readily would they also fulfil their whole purpose in the reformation of heart and mind.

The Apostles therefore instructed those to whom they were sent to observe the law, quite as certainly as they did so themselves. This part of the doctrine, declared by them in the earliest time, has been also preserved for us in the Sermon on the Mount. It did not fall to them first to state it; they had sayings enough of Jesus, which now found a fitting use. But the manner in which these were brought together, forming as they do the groundwork of the section, Matt. v. 21 ff., as well as their form in detail, shows us in certain respects plainly enough, that we are no longer dealing simply with the awakening of a new disposition, but with the founding of a secret community, and its relation to the outer world. The sayings of Jesus that are here employed are imperfectly understood, as long as we see in them a series of amendments on the current doctrine of the Scribes and Pharisees, and suppose that He was substituting for that doctrine a purer and deeper moral teaching. When we conceive the matter in this way, it is not easy to understand why the section should be preceded by the emphatic assurance, vv. 17-19, that the least part of the law shall not be destroyed, since the precepts afterwards discussed are, as a matter of fact, partly taken out of this very law. The words in verses 18 and 19, compared with verse 20, give indeed the impression that, if really due to Jesus, they were not spoken in His own name, but were quoted and employed by Him as Pharisaic tenets. Only in this way can verse 20, which contains neither a confirmation nor a justification but a contradiction, be connected intelligibly with what precedes. The meaning would then be, 'Verily, what has been taught concerning the binding force of every detail of the law shall be established;' but in that

case, the righteousness implied must still be different from the Pharisaic. Even when thus understood, the words still recognise the validity of the law. We would accordingly have an inconsequent grouping of entirely divergent sayings, if immediately afterwards this law were not only idealised, but abrogated in very important points. The sentences which are cited here as lessons from the law, with or without explanatory additions, are in the first place, and strictly speaking, not moral but legal precepts. The law was the jurisprudence of the Jews, and the Scribes had built up this jurisprudence by learned exposition and the addition of traditional law. Accordingly it is not moral doctrine, but authoritative civil law, that is cited with the words, 'It was said by the men of old time,' *i.e.* with the formula for a traditional jurisprudence. But the administration of this law was so one-sided and encroaching, that the moral life was identified with it, or rather the spirit of morality once fostered by the prophets was stifled. For this reason, therefore, Jesus could set His exhortations in opposition to the doctrine of the schools, and even to the sayings from the law imbedded in it. The precepts quoted are false, if looked upon as a complete and all-embracing rule of life. But His opposition in that case did not imply that those precepts would be abrogated as a whole. This is self-evident indeed as regards the commands not to kill and not to commit adultery. These commands were by no means suspended, although the angry word and the unchaste look were forbidden. But for precisely the same reason, the other commandments also which treat of divorce, oaths, revenge, and the treatment of friend and foe, necessarily retained their validity. The whole of these could remain as legal precepts and constituent parts of the public order, while there might yet exist under this order a body whose members based their conduct in such matters on quite other principles. Even the words concerning a resort to the action of the courts and the Sanhedrim for the punishment of those who felt or gave expression to a malignant anger, are not to be taken as a proposal for reform. On the contrary they were meant, as we see from the last parallel,

the hell of fire, to illustrate the culpability of the passion. If we understand these details as we have explained them, the difficulty of reconciling them with the saying about the duration of the law at once disappears; the contradiction no longer exists. In the form in which we possess the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew it has already, we cannot doubt, undergone changes and additions. The original was simpler and more regular. But yet we are perfectly justified in recognising throughout the design with which it was at the earliest date put into its present form, so as to perceive from it what demands were implied in the early apostolic proclamation of the gospel, and what attitude was assigned by it to Christians. It was not merely considered a duty among them to bridle even the heart itself in anger as in desire, but when they took no advantage of divorce, and refrained entirely from oaths, they reserved for their own observance a higher rule of life than the legal code derived from the law. But if in this way their voluntary self-restrictions kept them aloof, yet in other directions they perceived the opportunity of making known to outsiders the spirit of their religion. For under all circumstances they rather suffered than committed wrong; and on the contrary did good to their enemies.

But their whole rule of life, although it did not involve personal morality alone, but already pointed rather to the mutual obligations of the members of a community, did not issue in a conflict with the rule of the state. It was entirely consistent with respect for the law, and therefore with the behaviour which it was necessary for the early Church, existing in the heart of Jerusalem, to observe, in order that it should continue unmolested and enjoy a certain amount of toleration.

But not only were the law and their attitude to it discussed, but also that which constituted the so-called righteousness in the strict sense of the term, viz., good, or more correctly, pious works, and in the first place works of beneficence. The programme of these is connected in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vi. 1-18) with the discourse on the law, these two subjects

being discussed side by side. The subjects treated of in the usual combination are almsgiving, prayer, and fasting (*cf.* Tob. xii. 8). This section is also detailed in antitheses; but in the present case they are of an essentially different character, since here we have to do with a direct opposition of the teaching to the practice of the Scribes and Pharisees. Not that the contrast affected the deeds themselves; but it did affect the manner of their performance. If we remove here the manifest interpolations, then, in the three sections on almsgiving, prayer, and fasting, the true worship of God is contrasted with an empty pretence, by opposing a secret to a public performance of duties. And the true method was for believers in the Messiah the immediate consequence of the secluded life of their Church. On this side also the Church was defended against every suspicion of pretension, and therefore also from hostility. Here again we have a corroboration of the whole position occupied by the Church.

Thus the teaching given to the disciples supplements the instructions received by the Apostles for their mission, and we obtain from a comparison of the two evangelic sources a picture of the life, as well as of the mission, of the early Church, a picture on which we can depend, since these portions of the Gospel were a product, as it were, of the ground on which the events took place. As these brave men went from door to door through the land, they found hearers who, in their longing for salvation, were prepared to practise the self-denial of their teachers, and who, in order to participate in the coming kingdom, submitted to a discipline of thought and desire, renounced their rights in the law, sought by patient self-denial to obtain for themselves the kingdom of God, and preserved in silence the secret of their pious thought and action. All this they did since they had learned to direct their thoughts to those things which were above and belonged to the future. The simple and yet so powerful sayings of the Lord, received by them from tradition, regulated their conduct and their attitude to the world, an attitude in which there was no change, save that men could not fail to be impressed by

their humility and love to mankind. Yet the source of their whole life, the secret of their faith, their hope in the kingdom, they maintained in silence, and imparted to others only in the same way as they had themselves received it.

The contents of the apostolic teaching and belief concerning Christ have not entirely disappeared from our authorities, but yet they were preserved in a different way. From the nature of the case the narrative of events was much more flexible than the report of Jesus' sayings. It was also, at the first, exceedingly limited, and confined to the highest and most important matters. As in later times it was continually expanded and received a more complete form, its early features were lost sight of. But the narrative was not of the first importance. The main thing was the proof that was connected with it, the proof of the Messiah.

If at this point we have recourse, first, to the apostolic speeches in the Acts, we find that they offer especially noteworthy material in regard to the subject last mentioned. Three times Peter speaks on behalf of the Church and the Apostles, at Pentecost (ii. 14 ff.), in his address to the people after the cure of the lame man (iii. 12 ff.), and more briefly again on the latter occasion, in the speech to the Sanhedrim. The speech on the day of Pentecost begins by defending the miracle of tongues as a fulfilment of Joel's prophecy of the spirit, but it goes on to prove the resurrection of the Crucified from David's words in the sixteenth Psalm, in order, finally, by the help of Psalm cx., to attribute the outpouring of the spirit to the absolute power possessed by Christ after His return to life. The second address, that delivered in the temple to the people, proves from the miracle just accomplished that the Crucified was really the true prophet, who had been announced beforehand by Moses, as well as by all the prophets, and on whom the people destined to inherit the promise to Abraham must believe. And the third speech, the short defence before the Sanhedrim, justifies the crucifixion also from the prophecy which had foretold the Messiah's rejection in this very form. These three speeches, when taken together, give an exposi-



tion which, starting from the extant signs of the apostolic period, explain and establish from Holy Scriptures, first the resurrection, then the mission of Jesus as the Messiah, and finally His crucifixion. Although at the first glance this preliminary essay seems appropriate to the conditions, yet we cannot escape the feeling that the justification from the prophets of the miracle of the spirit is much more intelligible when we see in it the result of after observation and reflection, while, not to speak of its complication with the unhistorical miracle, it is only with difficulty that we can conceive of such a speech as having been already prepared and forthcoming at the moment of an overwhelming experience.

In the case of the second address to the people, we may again disregard its similar connection with the occasion on which it was delivered. Apart from that, the objection is weighty enough that at such a time the Apostles could not possibly have used the language attributed to them. Had they at that moment, in the Temple, and therefore in the fullest publicity, reproached the people with the murder of Jesus, an entirely different fate would undoubtedly have attended their first attempts. And the same thing is repeated, only still more incisively, before the Sanhedrim, which the Apostle confronts avowedly as an accuser. Besides, an accurate report of speeches, such as is only possible by means of notes taken at the time, is out of the question. But further, the circumstances just cited make it impossible to suppose that the speeches of the Acts rest, even as regards their substance, on a genuine tradition, a conclusion, finally, which is strengthened and decided by still other considerations. In the first place, a later speech of Peter in the Acts, x. 34 ff., shows very clearly the traces of free invention, and warrants therefore a similar conclusion in reference also to the earlier. In the second place, the speech of Paul in Antioch repeats the argument from the sixteenth Psalm. He reasons, precisely as Peter had done, that, as the death of David had undoubtedly taken place, the words could not possibly apply to the writer, ii. 29, xiii. 36. The two sections contain a repetition of the same nature as, say, that of the history of Paul's



conversion. There remains therefore hardly a doubt that it is not at one time Peter, at the other Paul, who speaks, but that the historian has assigned the same ideas to both. We are compelled, therefore, on the whole, to decide that the author sketched those earlier speeches of Peter in a form at once appropriate and corresponding to the situation he had preconceived for them. Only one feature do they contain which probably he did not invent, but found already in existence, namely, the Old Testament quotations as proof-texts for the Messianic mission of Jesus. Of these, however, the Deuteronomic forecast of the prophet, Deut. xviii. 15, as well as the application of Psalm cx. to the Messiah, are of a general nature, and it is therefore not necessary to suppose that they were put to this use for the first time in the early apostolic theology. We only see that they were appropriated by it. But elsewhere, as in the prophecy of the despised corner-stone, iv. 11, and of the deliverance from the corruption of the grave, ii. 27, the quotations suit so perfectly their use as a Messianic proof for the death and the resurrection of Jesus, that we may recognise in them the original work of the early apostolic theology.

We have, however, no means of determining whether as regards these quotations the author of the Acts made use of a distinct authority belonging to the period. These proof-texts were in any case a current tradition in his time quite as much as the practice of which they are instances. Indeed, we do not find in those employed by him the feature that can alone in certain cases indicate such a source. His quotations are all, as might have been expected from the linguistic character of his writing, taken from the LXX., and the deviations from the text of the latter are in part only verbal liberties, in part, however, only such changes as (i. 20, or ii. 17) facilitate their application. On the other hand, there are no references to the Hebrew text, such as we have in many of the proof-texts in the Synoptic Gospels, where they suggest the conjecture that we are dealing with fragments derived from the ancient practice of the early Church. Thus Mark xiv. 27, 'I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered,' is quoted

from Zech. xiii. 7, but while the first clause 'smite the shepherd' has been changed and applied to the divine action in order to bring the Supreme Cause upon the scene, the second diverges completely from the LXX., and is clearly based on the Hebrew text. In the same way the proof-texts for the introduction of Jesus by the Baptist (Mark i. 2, 3) are compiled from Exod. xxiii. 30; Mal. iii. 1; Isaiah xl. 3, and the use of a compilation points to an old tradition. Yet at the same time, in spite of the liberties taken with Mal. iii. 1, liberties easily explicable from their purpose, the passage still clearly refers to the Hebrew as its source. These synoptic proof-texts are the surest relics of the corresponding practice in the early Church, and form the best evidence that the oldest Gospel mission selected and settled, for confirmation of Jesus' Messiahship, such prophetic passages especially as affected the crucifixion and resurrection. According to 1 Cor. xv. we must, in particular, suppose that even at that time proof was given that Jesus had risen on the third day. Accordingly use was made of Hosea vi. 2. In the same way it was also proved 'according to the Scriptures' (xv. 3) in the early Church that the death of Christ took place for our sins (*cf.* Gal. ii. 16 ff.). And the oldest tradition of the Last Supper (1 Cor. xi. 23 ff.) presupposes the same thing. Further, Paul refers to the same tradition (Rom. i. 2 f.) for the proof from the prophets that Jesus must be a descendant of David 'according to the flesh.' Then, gradually, the evidence was drawn like a net over the whole history, until the words of the prophets thus chosen absolutely became a character-sketch of the life in its most essential features (as we may see from Matt. xii. 18 ff., and xiii. 14 ff.), or until the very narrative itself was formed entirely out of proof-texts, as, at last, in the history of the Passion, according to the account given in Matthew's Gospel. On the other hand, there was no obvious motive for setting up the Davidic genealogy at an early date. We have every reason to suppose that Jesus' origin was acknowledged to be Davidic during His lifetime; but there was no necessity to prove that the descent of the Messiah must be of this nature.

## CHAPTER III

### THE CHURCH

#### § 1. *Nature of the Society.*

THE information we are entitled to adduce from the Gospels, in order to obtain a picture of the earliest missionary activity and doctrine of the primitive Church, may suffice to establish the early existence of the *ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἰουδαίας* of Gal. i. 22, and at the same time to explain generally how these Churches could exist in the midst of the Jews. This, however, leads to the further question as to the form under which Christians united.

If we take in succession the names given to the Christians in our oldest authorities, we obtain a series of facts, that by itself presents us with a considerable portion of their history as a society. Throughout the Gospels they are always called *μαθηταί*, scholars, or disciples of Jesus. This name entirely disappears from Paul's time onwards; in its place there appear other two. The society considered as such, the members regarded in their relation to one another, and therefore, also, from the point of view of their obligations and disposition, are now named *ἀδελφοί*, brethren. When the community is looked on as a Church of God, and its members as comrades in a religious fraternity, they are called *οἱ ἅγιοι*, the saints, and this is the liturgic name. The Acts, further, shows the transition. The account of the eye-witness who accompanied Paul still employs the name *μαθηταί* for an ancient Church, xxi. 4, 16, as elsewhere *ἀδελφοί*, xxviii. 14, and in the same way the designation varies in the parts that belong to the author of the book himself, yet with the reservation that

for the more ancient time and the Jewish Christian Churches the name of disciple is still the rule. 'Saints' is also used exceptionally, ix. 32 and 41. The name *μαθηταί* passed therefore to the earliest Church from the time of Jesus himself, and it quietly dropped out of use, as in subsequent years the recollection of the relations it denoted passed into the background. Then the new names derived from the nature of the Church came to the front. But this change of name implies also an inner transformation, and marks the process of the development of the Church. The first followers of Jesus Himself, the men who gathered round Him, travelled with Him, and lived with Him, were simply the pupils of a teacher. Of course Jesus was no professional Scribe, but He prepared the way for obtaining the reputation of one, and, while looked on as an extraordinary phenomenon, was always treated as one of the doctors. He was addressed by the terms Rabbi or Sir, Teacher or Master, *διδάσκαλος, ἐπιστάτης*. Even the twelve, who in later times were habitually called Apostles, were in His lifetime merely His scholars, and the very fact that He gathered disciples around Him could not fail to confirm the opinion prevalent about Himself. For this reason all sorts of questions came to be put to Him, not in every case with a treacherous design, but in accordance with the usual practice of obtaining and observing the sayings of such teachers. Now, after the Master's departure, it was still possible to look on the disciples as His school, and they continued to form such a school, at all events in so far as they constantly repeated His expressions, and employed them in their teaching. Thus Acts ii. 42 puts in the forefront of the description of their earliest communion the words, 'they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine.' In this limited sense they too actually became teachers themselves, and the others were their scholars. But all of them still bore the name *μαθηταί*, simply in the sense that they were scholars of Jesus. The continuance of the school in the proper sense of the term, so that now the Master's first disciples became in their turn authorities in the exposition of the law, is negatived by a

thoroughly established fact. It was distinctly remembered that the word of the Master debarred them from such a position. This very feature was to distinguish them from the Scribes. None of them, however prominent he might be, was permitted to accept the name of Master, Teacher, or Lord, or to acknowledge the honour implied in such a form of address. The emphasis with which this prohibition was transmitted proves plainly that, at least in the earliest time, the time when precedents were established, it was strictly observed. For this reason all who received the word were emphatically the disciples of Jesus alone. In the prohibition the fundamental principle of the equality of all found expression; and from it, at the same time, rose the consciousness that their association was different from a school of the law. But, further, their teaching was not confined to the exposition of the law, embracing as it did their faith in Jesus as the Christ, and in His kingdom, and their doctrine, for the reason above stated, was of course deprived of the official authority which belonged to that of a school. By the public, nevertheless, they could be regarded as a *αἵρεσις* after the analogy of the Pharisees and Sadducees, as a party which cherished certain distinctive opinions, Acts xxiv. 5, 14.

The bond which existed between the *μαθηταί* was, from its nature and objects, of a different kind, and much more comprehensive than that of a school. It is indeed most simply designated by the term *κοινωνία*, which, in fact, is the expression employed in Acts ii. 42. Though this word naturally suggests the community of goods, yet, as it stands unaccompanied by any more precise definition, we are not justified in limiting it to a community in particular things or customs. The word is, besides, explained distinctly by Paul (Gal. ii. 9). The Apostles to the Jews and to the heathens gave each other their hand in order to declare their *κοινωνία*, and in their case the term could only mean that they recognised each other as associates in the same faith. It therefore really expresses the consciousness of the belief in Christ as constituting for them a universal bond, embracing their whole life, a bond from which they derived their whole conduct, every-



thing that evidenced their faith. The relationship thus constituted obtained its complete expression in the name *ἀδελφοί*. And as the relationship advanced towards its full realisation, this name necessarily made way for itself, and supplanted their earlier title.

The *κοινωνία* which formed the Christians into a brotherhood was the community of the kingdom of God, and the conviction that through Christ they belonged to it. In this its ideal nature it was thoroughly adapted to serve as the ground of union, yet without causing any prejudice to their adherence to their national faith and allegiance. They had no desire to be renegades, nor was it possible to regard them as such. Even if they did not maintain and observe the whole Cultus, yet this did not endanger their allegiance. Judaism permitted not only great latitude in doctrinal views, but also a partial observance of the Cultus, as is sufficiently proved by the instance of the Essenes in this period. The Christians did not lay themselves open to the charge of violating the law. They did not take up an aggressive attitude. Their appearance before the local courts as well as before the Sanhedrim, the supreme national tribunal, consists with the fact that on the whole they remained Jews. Whether the events recorded in Acts iv. 21, v. 40, took place or not, and the narratives are in the circumstances open to doubt, yet it is in itself quite conceivable that individual Christians should have been prosecuted, but dismissed on account of defective evidence, or that at another time their dismissal should have been accompanied by a punishment that was more of the nature of a warning. The processes and penalties in the local courts, referred to in Matt. x. 17, correspond, no doubt, with history. Only it cannot be said how soon such things took place, especially as they are already (ver. 18) mentioned side by side with proceedings taken before heathen magistrates. The whole position of the early Christians in the Jewish Commonwealth negatives also the view that they made a practice of establishing a special synagogue for themselves on Jewish soil, or avowedly formed congregations beside the existing synagogues. Since the synagogue was a regular institution of



the Jewish community, their doing so would have been equivalent to a complete desertion of all national associations and obligations and would therefore have resembled a revolt. The only question is, whether the existence of synagogues for foreigners in Jerusalem gave them a pretext for setting up an independent one there. It is our book of Acts that mentions these in a passage beyond suspicion. It speaks (vi. 9) of the synagogue of the so-called Libertines, *i.e.* Roman Jews, and 'Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia who disputed with Stephen.' It is not quite clear whether we should think here of a single synagogue embracing all these nationalities, or of several, and in that case, how many. The second alternative is supported by the consideration that the foreigners who, according to this account, assembled in meeting-places of their own in Jerusalem, proceeded on the basis of their nationality. In that case it might be conjectured that the Christians, as natives of Galilee, Acts i. 11, ii. 7, took up a similar position. Yet it cannot be proved that the name was applied to them in the required sense. From Acts xxiv. 5, we must suppose that they were rather known by the name of Nazarenes, and as this term probably designated, not the origin of the body, but that of its Founder, it is of a different character. It applied to the religious sect as such. It resembles, therefore, the name *Χριστιανοί*, derived afterwards amid heathen surroundings from the watchword of their faith, and employed, according to Acts xi. 26, at an early date in Antioch, but at all events at a time when Christians and Jews stood opposed to each other, and under circumstances which revealed this opposition even to outsiders. But even if the Christians had, like the Libertines, formed a synagogue of Galileans in Jerusalem, the fact would not throw much light on the institutions of their fellowship. We know nothing at all about the intention, or the regulations, under which the various nationalities formed themselves into separate synagogues. Moreover, with regard to the whole question, we must not overlook the failure to find in our authorities any mention of the term synagogue being applied to Christians. They

themselves seem always to have denoted the congregation in Greek by the word *ἐκκλησία*. The Churches which existed in Judæa in the period following the conversion of Paul are named by him, Gal. i. 22, the *ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἰουδαίας*. The name synagogue was avoided, and the fact that it was avoided, in spite of the ease with which by a qualifying word or phrase it could have been distinguished from that of the Jews, warrants the conclusion that their meeting even in form had nothing in common with that institution. The name *ἐκκλησία* applied to them the idea which belonged to the whole body of God's people, and indeed the earliest expression is *ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ*, the Church of God. Believers who recognised the distinctive character of their faith could not be satisfied with forming a separate synagogue. As on the one hand they lost the right to do so in union with their fellow-citizens, so on the other it had ceased to correspond with their own nature. It was far from embracing all they desired. The assembly, in which a community regularly listened to the exposition of the law, provided no fit expression for their consciousness. For their union was grounded, not merely on their expectation of the kingdom of God, but on the conviction that they were already its members. With this belief the name *ἐκκλησία τοῦ Θεοῦ* corresponded, and in the same sense the members of the society were called *ἅγιοι*, the holy ones of God.

A part of this question which, if not decisive, is at least important, is the place of meeting. On this point little can be gathered from the Acts. It mentions the temple (ii. 46), later also the part of the out-buildings known as Solomon's Porch (v. 12, iii. 11). Since this place was free to every one, the statement is not in itself open to objection. But when it is added that they publicly addressed the people there, the situation is hardly conceivable. We learn still less from other statements in the Acts. The gathering in a private room, i. 13, ii. 1, belonged so exclusively to the earliest beginnings, to the time when the intimate relations of the believers in Jerusalem resembled those of a family, that it suggests nothing with regard to later times. And the undefined

meeting-place of iv. 31, as well as, further on, the house of Mary the mother of John Mark, teach us nothing, because, if for no other reason, we are dealing there on both occasions with exceptional gatherings during times of danger. We cannot therefore say with any certainty whether the Church in Jerusalem had in this earliest time a fixed place of assembly. And one of their social practices, the breaking of bread, is specifically relegated in the Acts to private houses (ii. 46).

The peculiar characteristics of the Christian Union, which demanded more than was afforded by a school or synagogue, may now be best indicated by certain practices observed by its members. In the front rank of these may be cited prophecy. In the passages where Paul, at the period of his great epistles, discusses the circumstances of the Church, he speaks of prophets and prophecy. They were inseparable accompaniments of the gospel in Thessalonica, in Corinth, in Rome, *i.e.* wherever the gospel had been received. Nor are we to look on their presence there as a consequence of his preaching. As a matter of fact, he had not been in Rome at all. When, further, Paul, in defending himself against his Judaistic opponents, appeals to his visions and revelations, the inference is clear that among them also, and very specially among them, the prophetic gift was acknowledged and honoured. We have in the Apocalypse yet another and a classical witness to the fact that we are here dealing, not with an exceptional, but a universal feature of early Christianity. The author, himself a prophet, has (xxii. 9) his brethren in the Church: the prophets are his fellow-servants. The Christian Church as such is called in this book, 'the saints, apostles, and prophets' (xviii. 20), or, more briefly, 'prophets and saints' (xviii. 24), 'saints and prophets' (xvi. 6). We have therefore only further to ask how far back this order can be traced. The Acts mentions prophets of the early Church, for the first time, at the beginning of or shortly before the reign of the Emperor Claudius (xi. 27). It relates that at that time prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch, among them Agabus, who at a later time warned Paul

in Cæsarea, foretelling the fate that awaited him in Jerusalem (xxi. 10). On the earlier occasion, however, he foretold a famine, and thus caused help to be given to the brethren in the capital. Again, the book mentions, about ten years afterwards, that prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. This time they were ambassadors of the Church there, and their mission was to convey the letter intended to settle the question about the obligations of the heathens. The two ambassadors, Judas and Silas, are termed prophets (xv. 32), and it is also stated in a previous verse (xv. 22) that they belonged to the chief men among the brethren, yet they are called neither apostles nor elders. Besides, even before this, not long after the first appearance of the Jerusalemite contingent, prophets and teachers are also mentioned by name who belonged to the Church of Antioch itself (xiii. 1). These are Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, and Saul, and the fact that three of the names do not occur elsewhere points to a good authority. But since Barnabas belonged to the primitive Church, and came thence to Antioch, it is to be presumed that, in the opinion of the writer of the Acts, prophecy was transplanted from the capital to the other city. In those circumstances it is striking that the book has hitherto told us nothing of the existence of prophets in Jerusalem. This may have been due to the predominant and exclusive interest taken by the writer at the outset in the Apostles, and soon afterwards the narrative introduces the appointment of elders, whose authority eclipsed to some extent that of the prophets. This has not led him, however, to overlook the existence of the gift in the early Church from the beginning. It finds expression, though in a peculiar form, in the narrative of the Pentecost miracle, which he has placed in the forefront of his history. The import of this event is revealed in the speech of Peter (ii. 14 ff.). It was the fulfilment of Joel's prophecy of the universal outpouring of the Spirit of God, by which every one without distinction, from the greatest to the least, received the calling to the prophetic office. Now this is certainly the historical part of the narrative. The members of the Church felt the

presence of the new spirit so strongly, they saw so many proofs of it in the Church, that they were confident of the fulfilment of Joel's words in their own time. The Church held in its faith the key to the whole past. To it this fulfilment opened up the whole history of prophecy. But it also possessed complete certainty with regard to the future, and the exact explanation of all things that then befell or were yet fated to befall it. Nor is it too much to say that the conviction burst upon the Christians like a flash from heaven. Afterwards the legend took this germ, and developed it into the miracle of languages, which is really not at all concordant with the idea of the general outpouring of the Spirit. The Acts certainly tells us moreover that in the house of Cornelius (x. 46, xi. 15), and again among John's disciples (xix. 6), the reception of the Spirit revealed itself in the use of tongues, and in the latter case also in prophesying, the gifts being exercised exactly as, according to Paul, was the case in the Churches. The speaking with tongues, however, does not here take the Pentecostal form of a miraculous command of languages, but is conceived rather in the form with which the Epistle to the Corinthians has made us familiar. But that, according to the narrative of Pentecost, or, better, according to the application to it of Joel's words, the gift of the Spirit was imparted to all the members of the Church, proves not only that all were certain that they possessed the Spirit, but that none was conscious of the power of prophecy having been withheld from him. It might be quickened in him at any moment. Still, even in the earliest age, there were men who possessed it in a peculiar degree, and were therefore regarded as prophets in the narrower sense of the term. It was precisely this earliest period that produced prophecy. The primitive Church lived in its belief in the resurrection and return of the Master; and this belief in the future necessarily produced prophecy concerning the future. The former both created and was sustained by the latter. For the fact itself we can quote, besides, the mention of prophets, and that along with Apostles, in the discourses of Jesus (Matt. x. 41, xxiii. 34, vii. 22, xxiv. 11, 24). This points



with absolute certainty to their actual presence in the primitive Church.

§ 2. *The Common Meals, and the Treatment of the Poor.*

The Book of Acts (ii. 42) gives prominence also to the *κλάσις τοῦ ἄρτου*, the breaking of bread, as one of the elementary usages, distinctive and constitutive of the first Christian Church. Since the author had behind him Pauline language and doctrine, we are justified in adducing the language of the Apostle in order to explain the expression. Paul employs the term habitually to designate the rite of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. x. 16, xi. 24). Further, the Acts also (xx. 7) relates, clearly in the same sense, how Paul "broke bread" in the meeting held by him in Troas. The matter is not so free from doubt in the statement (xxvii. 35) which occurs in the record of the eye-witness. There Paul performs the act in presence of the heathens on the ship, in order to encourage them to take their food. But yet he probably succeeded in doing so not merely by setting them the example of eating. The example produced its effect just because in this act he practised before them a usage of his faith. For the rest, we may at this point disregard the question, whether in the breaking of bread the primitive Church expressly celebrated the memorial supper of Jesus. The narrative of the Acts, at any rate, emphasises something else, namely, that a common meal was taken, and that (ii. 46) in their homes, *κατ' οἶκον*. The words do not suggest a place set apart for meetings (cf. ver. 42), but, in direct contradistinction to this, the private house; yet it is by no means implied that those who took part were exclusively members of the household. The emphasis is laid on the meal being a common act shared in by brethren, because it was associated with their brotherly spirit, their single-heartedness (*ἀφελότης*), and gratitude to God. We do not know the process by which the private communion of the regular meal tended to become an elective communion among believers. But the memory of their intercourse with Jesus Him-

self must have led to this mode of certifying their union in the faith. Many traces point to the manner in which He, as head of the house, presided at the table of the disciples, and by the very act of doing so adopted them as His followers. In some of the Resurrection legends His manner of breaking bread becomes a sign by which they recognise Him (Luke xxiv. 30 f., John xxi. 13 f.). That His disciples were not to fast as long as He was with them does not merely mean that His presence made them uniformly joyful, but also that every meal taken in company with Him was a divine thanksgiving. But the trust in God, and the hopes that were involved for them in this communion, are evident in all the traditions of His words, in which the future of His kingdom is represented under the figure of a Supper, as well as in the narrative, symbolical throughout, of His miraculous feeding of the multitudes. When therefore His followers continued these common meals, they involved, even apart from the memorial celebration instituted by Him at the last, the perpetual renewal both of their relations to Him and of the union constituted by Him. The meal itself was therefore a religious act. It became a thank-offering, and a type and evidence of the kingdom of God existent among them, and ruling and transforming their whole natural and social life. This usage of the common meal as a divine service helps, in its own way, to illustrate the nature of the Church quite as much as prophecy, the evidence that all alike possessed the Spirit, does in another.

So far we have entirely omitted the special circumstances by which an extraordinary importance attached to the enjoyment of daily food in the first period of this community. But there is no doubt that with the conception of a divine service there was connected, in the case of a considerable number at least, the sense of gratitude for the assistance granted at each meeting to cope with daily wants. The Church included in its midst a large body of poor. This fact is certainly attested by the agreement between Paul and the first Apostles (Gal. ii. 10). About two decades had elapsed since the beginning in Jerusalem. It had been a time

of growth for the Church. Its increase had been unchecked by the persecutions it had undergone, and had brought within its pale elements from all ranks and classes. And now, when the older Apostles granted to Paul and his companion Barnabas the great concession by which they recognised the mission to the heathen, and when a return was naturally expected by which the Gentile Christians should also prove their goodwill to the parent Church, the only demand made was that they should contribute to the support of the poor. It was the most natural way of proving their brotherly love and fellowship. The proposal, however, shows unmistakeably that want existed,—a poverty which filled them with constant anxiety, and, even at such a moment, forced itself at once on their thoughts. It proves quite as strongly, on the other hand, that the Church in Jerusalem concerned itself with this care of the poor, and regarded it as a duty committed to it, an essential expression of its faith. In both senses, as regards the existence of want and the duty of love, the presence of the poor furnished the Church with a vital question. We are nowhere informed how this poverty arose. If we refer to the Gospels, we perceive indeed that rich people, strictly so called, were hardly to be found among the followers of Jesus. His own words about the difficulty in the way of a rich man's entrance into the kingdom of heaven are decisive. Yet there were not wanting well-to-do persons who contributed to the support of Jesus and His disciples. And on the whole it cannot be said that His companions consisted exclusively of poor men. Some of them at least owed their poverty to the fact that they had left their former position and abandoned their property in order to devote themselves wholly to the cause of the Master. The removal to Jerusalem may have completed their destitution, and yet we cannot ascribe the after existence of a class of poor entirely to that event. The additions which the Church continually received in Jerusalem must also have considerably strengthened this element. But the increase was not derived exclusively from the poor. We may assume that these different

causes contributed together to create the poverty which existed in the Church. But the whole community was not poor. Even from Paul's letters we learn that the Church as a whole was not in need; that only some of its members were, for whose wants it itself provided, while it gladly welcomed any support that came from without. In 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 3, 2 Cor. ix. 1, Paul speaks indeed simply of the maintenance of the saints in Jerusalem. But as early as Gal. ii. 10 he expresses himself differently, and so in Rom. xv. 26 he speaks of a levy for the poor belonging to the saints, *i.e.* to the Church in Jerusalem.

Now if in the Church there were constantly poor to be found for whom it was the duty of the brethren to care, the words of Acts iv. 34, 'There were no longer any needy persons among them,' were only used in an ideal sense. And we can only understand in the same sense the statements meant to explain this result: 'no man any longer spoke of his own possessions, for they had all things in common' (ii. 44, iv. 32). This account itself rather indicates a support in proportion to need (ii. 45, iv. 35). And as the support was admittedly continued and lasting, it is self-evident that there was no universal division of goods. Besides, the description given of the conduct of the members corresponds in two respects with this conclusion. The author of the Acts relates in the first place in general terms that believers sold their possessions of every sort, movable and heritable, lands and houses, and distributed the price 'to all men' (ii. 45, iv. 34), and he remarks further (iv. 35) that the distribution was effected through the hands of the Apostles. The examples cited by him show how his statements are to be understood. First, Joseph named Barnabas sold a field and caused the proceeds to be divided (iv. 36 f.). Secondly, Ananias and Sapphira sold a piece of ground and delivered up the price, but not the whole of it, in spite of their declaration to the contrary (v. 1-11). These were accordingly large voluntary contributions, handed over to the Church for distribution, and were of the same character as the support stipulated for in later times to be given by the Gentile Christians. No

special object is attributed to them. On the other hand, this is done in another instance of the practice, according to the narrative, of the appointment of deacons (vi. 1-6). Here the writer is dealing with the regular support of the widows in the Church, and it is expressly stated that this was afforded by the daily table. This passage, accordingly, shows still more clearly that it was the assistance of the poor, and not a community of goods, which was carried out by the early Christians. The general description of the offerings brought for the purpose is strongly supported by the instance of Barnabas, which the author plainly obtained from tradition, and which probably formed the groundwork of his whole description. But even the narrative of Ananias may have been founded on history. It is clear that such individual cases of great services were well remembered and were told long afterwards. This shows of course that they were not of every-day occurrence, but were stamped on the memory as phenomenal. The narrative of the provision made for the widows is not so free from suspicion. They could hardly have formed a separate class in the earliest period. Yet, on the whole, even this section has a presumption in its favour, if it were only from the names of the seven deacons. It is at all events possible that at an early date there was occasion to provide, perhaps only for a time, a separate poor-table for persons without family connection. The very fact that the diaconate was discontinued and left no trace, and that it is quite isolated in the narrative, suggests a special tradition, although the technical designation, *χήραι*, may refer to the later time of the author. Besides, the usages of the primitive Church are mirrored in the Gospels. The extraordinary services of individuals, springing out of the pure impulse of enthusiasm, and leading to complete renunciation, are reflected in the demand which Jesus made upon the rich young man, as is the feeding of the poor in the parable of the Heavenly Supper (Luke xiv.). The spirit of the gospel involved not merely a helpful love of our neighbour, but also the renunciation of property as a hindrance to the service of God, and a barrier in the way of righteousness in His kingdom.



But the calculation of the future could not maintain this feature. For the belief was, that their waiting for the kingdom was but a question of a very short time.

The union of motives must be kept constantly in mind if we are to gain and elucidate a correct view of the period. It was not generosity alone that lay at the root of the Christian treatment of the poor. They were indeed generous, but their practice proceeded quite as much from purely religious motives,—the contempt of material prosperity on the one hand, and the acceptance of their associates as members of the kingdom of God, and therefore brethren, on the other. Nor can it be said whether it was precisely the expectation of support and equal treatment that attracted the poor to the Church in Jerusalem. Charity was indeed not confined to Christians; this is sufficiently attested in the Gospels, while the Acts proves its existence in Jerusalem, certainly for the most part in the form of alms to beggars; but who would assert that the latter did not enjoy greater prosperity, or at least greater comfort, than was offered them by the support and ministrations of those Galileans who, with their gifts, certainly imposed great self-denial? If, accordingly, the social mission of the Church exercised an attractive power, yet its effect can by no means be separated from that of the faith itself. The various influences at work so overlapped each other, that the grand result can only be ascribed to the preaching of the gospel as one undivided whole. On the other hand, we may affirm without hesitation that the form in which the community of goods was observed by the Church provided the general feature distinctive of the character and form of their social union. It was no mere school. As little was it merely a separate synagogue. It was much rather a society in the strict sense, in so far as, without a formal constitution or law, it involved far-reaching mutual obligations on the part of its members, and indeed bound them together in an alliance that embraced their whole life. Of all the parties, more or less religious, of contemporary Judaism, it most nearly resembles the society of the Essenes. What distinguishes it from

the latter is not merely the difference in doctrine about the means of attaining righteousness, but also, and in an equal degree, the different form of the society. The Essenes, through their binding rules and their suppression of individualism, were, from their very nature, an order of limited extent. In the new Society the moral obligation of liberty reigned, and disclosed an unlimited future. It was precisely the belief in the brief duration of earthly existence that contributed most to found an enduring world-religion.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE CHECK AND THE ADVANCE

#### § 1. *General View.*

THE spiritual leaders of the primitive Church were found in Jesus' own disciples, and among these the twelve, whom He had appointed to be the beginning of the new Israel, enjoyed a commanding position. The allegorical import of the number attests the historical character of the narrative which tells us that the gap caused by the desertion of Judas was filled up by the appointment of a substitute, Matthias. They were above all others the born heralds of the doctrine of Jesus and of the kingdom, the bearers of the message. And for this reason the collective title, 'the twelve,' early gave place to the name of 'messengers,' *ἀπόστολοι*, and only afterwards reappeared when it was necessary to distinguish them from the others. The foremost position in the work was received by the man who had first seen their risen Master. When Paul afterwards discussed with them the great question of missions, it was recognised that Cephas had obtained from the Spirit the special gift of the mission to the Jews.

But at an early date the brothers of Jesus took their place, and were awarded a peculiar esteem by the side of the twelve. The Gospels are throughout agreed that, during Jesus' life, and up to His death, they stood aloof from Him, and we must therefore correct the statement of the Acts, which already includes them in the little community immediately after His last farewell. The

belief in the resurrection had already penetrated a large circle before James accepted it. This James, the whole of whose importance first became evident at a later time, was the oldest brother of Jesus. Even in the earliest years, after he, and with him probably his brothers, changed sides, Paul considered his meeting with him to be almost as important as that with Cephas. And the reverence paid to the brothers, like the reverence paid to the twelve, was due to their personal relations with Jesus Himself. Yet the conception which now placed His relatives beside His chosen companions marks a different mode of thought.

We can no longer, however, decide at how early a date certain special tendencies were developed within the primitive Church. Two decades after the beginning they present themselves to us as an accomplished fact. Only one episode, the history of Stephen, gives us a glimpse into the movement of the spiritual life. Then inner and outer development received at one and the same time an impetus, but while in the meantime the direct effect on the inner life was slight, it affected all the more strongly the external conditions, and these influenced in turn the life of thought and feeling.

The destinies of the primitive Church in Palestine are defined by alternate periods of toleration and persecution. However long the first period of toleration may have lasted, and whatever may have been the form assumed by the relations of the Church to its surroundings during that period, it must at all events have soon given place to a time of persecution. This began in the year 35, and ended in any case in 44, and was followed by a time of peace, which extended to the outbreak of the great Jewish war.

The Apostle Paul is our most reliable witness for the persecution. We do not here depend upon his accounts of the sufferings inflicted on him by the Jews during his missionary career (2 Cor. xi. 24, 26), for there he is dealing with more recent events. But we refer to his confessions in Gal. i. 14, as well as in 1 Cor. xv. 9, where he states that he himself had taken part in persecuting the primitive Church. And further, the fact is confirmed in

all its main features in 1 Thess. ii. 14. The Church of Thessalonica, consisting of members who were formerly heathens, was attacked and oppressed by surrounding enemies; all this, says Paul, had happened already to the Christian Churches in Judæa: just as the former were attacked by their own people, so the latter had been attacked by the Jews. When Paul wrote this, towards the middle of the sixth decade, the persecution was at an end, and its citation was therefore all the more adapted to encourage the Thessalonians.

But the Gospels also prove this persecution. It is certain that Jesus had Himself prepared His followers for strife and suffering. Still, the form in which His words are reported, mentioning by name the separate agents in the persecution, and even the penalties inflicted by it, force us to assume that we have here an expansion of His sayings, in which actual experiences are reflected. In the instructions to the Apostles in Matthew, mention is made of persecution in the law-courts and synagogue (x. 17). Yet the vivid colours with which, in words of the Lord, are depicted in the Gospels the family feuds springing up round the new faith, and the division between parents and children, with the accompanying warning that the confession must take precedence of all ties of blood, that fidelity to Jesus must be maintained even at the cost of the hatred of their nearest kin (x. 34 ff.), picture this time of disruption and hostility in the heart of their own people.

The Acts describes for us the beginning of these persecutions, and marks them definitely as a new epoch. The warnings and lesser penalties that precede (iv. 21, v. 40) are indeed heralds of the storm, but yet they belong to an entirely different chapter of events, and exert no influence upon the new era. That troubles of the sort occurred in Jerusalem is certainly possible, although as certainly the Apostles did not provoke them by appearing in such a way as to challenge the authorities. The information of the Acts is so far right that it knows the Sadducees to be at the helm (v. 17). The office of the high priest was in Sadducean



hands, and they predominated in the high-priestly families. The names also of their influential men, John and Alexander, as well as those of the historical high priests Caiaphas and Annas, names used by the author, after his fashion, to denote also the date (iv. 6), are undoubtedly derived from tradition. But if the power of the Sadducees was not without its consequences for the Christians, these consisted in tolerance, or, better, in a temporising policy, rather than in zealous persecution.

### § 2. *Stephen.*

The peace which the Church enjoyed in its internal and external relations was really interrupted for the first time by the events connected with the name of Stephen. Stephen meets us in the earlier part of the narrative as one of the deacons appointed to take charge of the poor-table, in order to remove the grievances of the Hellenists, who had complained that their people were being unfairly treated (vi. 1-6). By this appointment the matter was arranged. But Stephen is described at this the first mention made of him as a man of great importance. And his importance is due, not merely to superior spiritual gifts, but still more to the tendency with which he intervened in the relations of the Church to Judaism. He caused the first rupture. To himself the result was death; and the shock imperilled the existence of the whole Church. But she maintained her position, and what seemed likely to prove her ruin became the first memorial of her advance, the starting-point, we may say, of her march through the world.

Although the Acts is our only authority for this episode, our sole authority indeed even for the name of Stephen, and although the narrative given by this book does not seem equally reliable in all its parts, often giving us only indirect glimpses of the truth, yet it has always been recognised that in this matter we find ourselves on historical ground. It has been indeed objected, that the figure of Stephen anticipates the historical mission of Paul, and is

conceived therefore only to form a concrete introduction to the entrance of the latter. But that is rather the superficial result of a general view. In fact, we have before us a historical situation of an entirely original character, one which corresponds accurately to the crisis.

The epoch which began with Stephen is introduced by the fact, that as the Church in Jerusalem increased there sprang up a considerable Hellenistic element. The earliest members of the Church were Galileans. To these, native Jews resident in Jerusalem had been the first to join themselves, and then there was added, like a wider circle, this new section of the people, Jews of the dispersion, who, while born in Greek-speaking lands, had emigrated to Jerusalem, or at any rate were for the time living there. That these were the last to join is implied in the narrative of the misunderstandings about the doles. The supply for the Hellenists fell short simply because the Hebrews were already in possession. The former had to be first received and recognised in this connection also. These Hellenists were in every respect good Jews. The impulse also that had brought them to Jerusalem proved of itself their strong attachment to the faith of their fathers. But still they had had within their reach a culture different from that of the native Jerusalemites, and this, as a matter of fact, influenced them to some extent in those very matters that pertained to their religion. Even the Alexandrian Jews were Jews, yet a philosophy had taken root among them which was almost more Greek than Jewish, and which deduced novel ideas from the contents of Holy Scripture itself. Now it is not said whether Stephen himself was a Hellenist; still, the conclusion is natural, that complaints would be most easily put to rest by the appointment to the head of the new office of men selected from the party that felt itself aggrieved. And further, it is related that Stephen came first into conflict with people from Hellenistic synagogues. The Acts, indeed, gives an explanation in keeping with its whole mode of representing the Church. According to this, Stephen had attracted the attention of the

entire populace by signs and wonders. In consequence, the Hellenists had challenged him to a dispute, and then, in vexation at their bad success in argument, denounced him. It is self-evident, however, that Stephen must have stood in close personal relations with them; in other words, he had probably belonged hitherto to one of the Hellenistic synagogues, and was brought to book by his former associates as a renegade. This dispute may then have led to the denunciation in question. If, however, Stephen came from one of these synagogues, then this fact is at all events significant for his case. For among those mentioned, we have, beside that of the Roman Jews (Libertines), precisely that of the Alexandrians and their allies the Cyrenians, then of the Cilicians and the Asiatics; and even among the latter Greek learning had long since found an entrance. The subject of quarrel is not detailed further in the Acts. It only mentions the complaint that Stephen blasphemed Moses and God Himself, by maintaining that Jesus would destroy the temple and put an end to the law; it adds expressly, however, that false witnesses had to be procured in support of the accusation. The author then represents Stephen as delivering his defence in presence of the Sanhedrim. But his speech does not by any means refute the grounds of the complaint. On the contrary, it is at least in part equivalent to a substantial justification of the doctrine complained of, since it declares at its close that the worship of God in this temple 'made with hands' had never been in accordance with the will of God. If therefore we retain the false witnesses, the mention of their falsehood can only mean that Stephen, in speaking as he did, really blasphemed neither God nor Moses. Accordingly we can only infer from the report of Stephen's speech, as well as from the circumstances which led to his being accused, that he had declared his expectation that Jesus, in other words, the Second Advent, would put an end to the temple service and to the law.

Now this is by no means an anticipation of St. Paul's teaching. The Apostle declared on internal grounds that the observance of the law was not requisite, that it had no value, and if looked

upon as the way to righteousness was absolutely a hindrance to the attainment of salvation. Stephen, as far as we are told in the Acts, did not express himself on the practical question of the law in the present. What he did say of the cessation of the service enjoined by the old order referred only to the future, the kingdom that was to come. In giving the grounds of this expectation, on the other hand, he goes beyond the later doctrine of Paul, since Paul nowhere says that the temple cultus was opposed to the Divine intention from the beginning. On the contrary, this view of the cultus is irreconcilable with his conception of the place taken by the law in history.

The proof given in the speech of Stephen for his objectionable tenet about the temple may in the meantime be left wholly out of account in explaining the words, since they are accounted for quite satisfactorily by a reference to Jesus' prophecy of the destruction of the temple. This saying is common to our Gospels. It has none of the appearance of prophecy after the event. It is rather the one fixed point in the whole of the speeches on the future, a relic of the oldest time. It was not always rightly understood in the primitive Church, and even long afterwards quite other hopes were entertained, as the Apocalypse shows (xi. 1 f.). Even the speeches in Matthew and Mark, to which it forms the introduction and text, do not carry out the conception that prompted its utterance. But it is all the better attested just because of this. Even in John's Gospel we meet with a reminiscence, though already somewhat obscure, of this saying (ii. 19). If, however, it is to be regarded as a saying of Jesus, then it must have formed the basis of the doctrine ascribed to Stephen. Of course it might be thought: the temple will be destroyed, but will as certainly be restored. Only, at the same time; the tradition existed, that its destruction was to precede the return of Jesus and the setting up of His kingdom, and that involved the consequence that the temple would cease to have any importance in His kingdom, and would be destroyed precisely on that account.

But we have now the further question: If the prophecy was

handed down from Jesus, how came it first to obtain an authoritative exposition and to be realised in all its consequences through Stephen? Why did not the early Apostles from the first understand and declare it as he did? It may be answered that the difference may be quite well explained by the talents and tendencies of individual believers. It is not *prima facie* necessary to suppose that in the first missionary period of the early Apostolic Church all the aspects of the Master's teaching held and proclaimed by the Apostles were at once recognised. In fact it is certain they were not. But in the present case a special explanation also suggests itself. It may, on the whole, be supposed that this thought could scarcely have been elaborated and supported with a light heart. It cut too deeply into the sanctuary of thoughts and feelings nurtured on Jewish soil. Such words might be preserved, but men left what was to come of them to the future, and meanwhile reserved their own thoughts. And this view is confirmed by the variety of the expectations entertained even in later times, and by the persistence of inconsistent hopes. It was possible to temporise with the saying one way or another. It might be interpreted figuratively, or its meaning might simply be left in obscurity. Possibly it was not even accepted universally as a saying of Jesus. Nor was the relation to the law and the cultus by any means without its complications. It involved a problem that every day presented itself in a new form, and it would have been astonishing if from this source, besides divergence of attitude in single points, there had not soon arisen more thorough-going differences in the fundamental idea.

Thus considered, the emergence of the thought represented by Stephen is not to be wondered at, but it is obviously significant that the thought was expressed. If the temple was to come to an end at or rather before the appearance of Christ, the statement did not involve merely the belief that in His kingdom, even if constituted in the present world, no part of the divine service observed in the temple was to continue. One would be forced to think further concerning the duration of the law of Moses



as a whole, and it was impossible to avoid the inference that the law and all it embraced would be excluded from the kingdom. Although Jesus had said nothing on the point, although His personal adherence to the existent order might have given some support to exactly the opposite opinion, yet on the other hand there existed so many sayings of His about the nature and spirit of His kingdom, that, when once the conscience was delivered from the power of the established religion, there could have been no difficulty in connecting with His conception of that kingdom an ideal order of an entirely novel character. Accordingly, he who first earnestly believed in Christ's saying about the fall of the temple could hardly come to any other conclusion than that with which Stephen was charged. He had only to feel the necessity of forming a definite judgment on the future of the law.

It remains historically possible that the full perception of these conclusions was attained by Stephen, even if we were not in a position to say how it was that he reached it. If he was moreover a Hellenist of Alexandrian culture, then some light is also shed upon the latter point. The philosophy of these Jews did not indeed lead them to abandon the law, or to give up its future. It was possible to suppose a deeper sense underlying all its provisions, and to deduce this sense from another idea of God than that to which the cultus owed its origin, not only without any thought of abandoning, but with the express intention of upholding, the existent ritual. It was even possible to adapt this interpretation of sacred history to suit the teaching without giving it up as history. The practice of allegorising destroys our historical sense, but it leaves our belief in the history untouched. The great Jewish philosopher Philo proves both of these positions. But it cannot be disputed that familiarity with such interpretations might yet pave the way for the conclusion that as soon as the truth of the law was revealed from another direction its customs had lost their eternal validity. This, but no more, we may deduce from our conjecture that Stephen belonged to Hellenistic circles. But we can explain in the same way the fury of his

former associates against the renegade. For their persecution of him would be all the more eager if their own adherence to their institutions was forced and artificial, and self-contradictory at the core.

Once the thought found expression, however, it could not fail to strike every Jew with horror. It was neither more nor less than rank blasphemy. Nothing was to be expected but the condemnation of Stephen, and the inclusion of the whole Christian Church in the judgment.

The further information of the Acts is comprehended under two heads: the speech of Stephen before the Sanhedrim, and his condemnation. What is true of Peter's speeches is doubly true of that of Stephen. An authority with a report taken down on the spot is out of the question. Not only the length of the speech, but the wholly unfavourable conditions of the moment, make such a report improbable. But when we consider its contents, its plan and execution alike produce the impression rather of a doctrinal exposition than of a defence before a tribunal. It cannot be denied that the author indeed follows a line of thought fitted to explain the standpoint of Stephen quite as much as his present conflict. The climax and point of the whole address is in the declaration about Solomon's temple, which it describes as founded on a wrong conception, condemned by the prophets, and therefore unwarranted from the first. And the earlier part of the speech is quite consistent with the conclusion, in so far as it shows that through Solomon's unauthorised act the intention of God to grant a home for His genuine worship, an intention revealed from the times of Abraham and Moses, had been frustrated. Here also we have the defence of Stephen. It is the justification of the doctrine that the temple was not to remain. It is only to the temple that his words are applied. At the same time we cannot avoid the impression that the long historical introduction about Abraham, Joseph, and Moses, goes much further afield than was necessary for this purpose. It shows first how two declarations made by God in the time of Abraham, the promise of the land to the people,

and the prophecy of the exile and slavery that were to precede its possession, were fulfilled. Then it tells how deliverance was obtained by the mission of Moses. But at this point unbelief, blindness, and obstinacy appeared on the part of the people; and the mission of Moses and its resistance by the people serve as types of the mission of Jesus and its treatment by the Jews. All this is detailed in the fashion of a Christian text-book. It is even edited like a college lecture, and is therefore interspersed with various Jewish traditions, even some for which Philo is a witness, though he can hardly have originated them. Looked on as a speech, it is, like those of Peter, quite as clearly intended to produce conversions as to convey reproach. This general reproach is followed by a special charge. The transition is effected by the prophet's saying about the tent of Moloch and by the thought of the tabernacle (vii. 42 ff.). For the speech goes on to declare that Solomon built the temple without warrant in place of the tabernacle, and the suggestion involved in the parallel with Moloch can hardly be overlooked, viz., that the building of the temple was to be condemned as a form of Paganism. The speech concludes with a few bold words, in which the listeners are reproached with the murder of the prophets as well as with that of Christ, and even with failure to keep the law.

The difference has always been noticed between the curt and indeed abrupt style of the concluding portion of the speech and the breadth and copiousness of the beginning. The change has been attributed to the growing excitement of the speaker, or to the interruptions of his opponents, but these explanations have merely been read into the narrative. There is nothing to suggest them in the words of the author himself. Stephen is listened to patiently. His hearers rise in anger against him for the first time when he comes to his closing words of reproach. And, in fact, it is this closing portion that is decisive for the situation. Here is given the answer to the charges made against him of slandering not only the temple but the law. It is only against the latter charge, that of abrogating the law, that he replies, when he declares

that the Jews themselves had not kept the law received by them from the angels. They had therefore no reason to rise in wrath when another held that the same law was not to last for ever. But what is meant by saying that they had not kept the law? Hardly, merely that the Jews had laid themselves open, at all periods of their history, to the charge of transgressing it. The position of the words at the close of the speech gives them a much deeper significance. We only grasp this significance if we understand them to mean that the Jews as a people had never accepted the law in its true sense. The temple, condemned as it had been by the prophet, showed how incapable they were of receiving the Divine Spirit. Nay, on circumcision also a similar light is shed by the reproach that they were uncircumcised in heart and ears (ver. 51). The law contained, as was formerly said in the history of Moses, living sayings (v. 38), sayings to be spiritually understood and practised. By failing in this respect they opposed the Spirit of God. And even now their resistance was continued, since they could not free themselves from the temple nor its cultus, nor from the literal interpretation of the commands as a whole. These thoughts are clearly expressed only in the last sentences of the speech. But the more sharply we distinguish between the two sections, both as regards their objects and their details, the less are we entitled to explain the later portion by the earlier, or in this way to tone down its meaning.

The author of the Acts has probably in the present instance made use of ideas taken from a group of thoughts which were foreign alike to Stephen and his time, but which, without being strictly his own, existed concurrently with the writer in the post-apostolic age. It is not as a rule his practice to maintain a doctrine logically and firmly, and therefore with rigid consistency. It is rather the distinctive feature of his work that we find here and there ideas and motives which have an isolated and foreign look, and can only be thoroughly explained from other sources. It is therefore no satisfactory reason for desiring to refer the thoughts just described to a special source dealing with Stephen,

that they do not recur elsewhere in the Acts. As regards Stephen himself, it is not easy to see how with such far-reaching views he could have found scope for himself in the early Apostolic Church. Nor does the accusation of the false witnesses incorporated in our narrative contain the slightest trace of them. The thoughts, that the temple was to be rejected, and that the outward observance of the law was based on error, clearly grew up on other soil and in later times. It has long been observed that they recur in the post-apostolic epistle of Barnabas, where already they have Paulinism behind them. When Judaism attempted to force its way into the Christian Church, and to take violent possession of it, there rose from the heart of that Church the reply that the Jews had not the right that they claimed to the old Revelation. Their pretensions were barred by the corrupt use they had made of it. On the soil of the early Church this allegation did not grow. And it was only in a mitigated form that thoughts of such a nature could afterwards be ascribed to the man who had at first ventured publicly to repeat the prophecy that the temple, and, along with the temple, of course, the temple service, would come to an end.

### § 3. *The Consequences.*

There is no doubt that in consequence of the accusation made against him Stephen was stoned. This form of death was the Jewish penalty for blasphemy, and therefore was most probably recognised by the Sanhedrim. Only, while the Acts, indeed, narrates that he was put upon his trial, and defended himself before that court, it makes no mention of the passing of judgment. It rather represents the proceedings as ending in a riot, during which the stoning took place. To an official carrying out of the death-penalty by Jewish magistrates there is also the objection, that, under the Roman administration as it then existed, they did not possess the right of execution. It is a mere makeshift to infer this right from the connivance of Pilate in the case of Jesus: Jesus was executed by the Romans. The explanation



based on the recall of Pontius Pilate is also uncertain; we have no means of knowing whether the event took place at that period, nor whether there was an interval that would correspond to it between him and his successor Marcellus. We can only suppose that the author of the Acts had no longer any more accurate information as to the course of events, and that the obscurity of his narrative, which leaves us unable to decide between a legal execution and a massacre, was simply due to ignorance. The author's suggestion of a mere riot may have been, besides, connected with a desire on his part to convey the impression that the condemnation of the Christians was illegal. On the other hand, an execution with the connivance of the Romans is at all events not impossible. And for this view we can cite the further development of the case; in which there is no mention of any excess which would have given the Romans occasion to interfere. A general Jewish persecution followed; this certainly took place under the leadership of the Sanhedrim, and was therefore public. When men without office like Saul entered into it as volunteers, they were armed with authority from the highest Jewish tribunals. And the flight and dispersion of the Church from Jerusalem are only intelligible if we suppose that the Christians thus escaped from the seat of the supreme magistracy, the place where the danger was greatest.

Thus after a brief period came to an end the privacy of the Christians, and their peaceful relations with the rest of the Jews. Now, for the first time, they were recognised to be renegades, and the whole zeal of the guardians of the law was turned against them. And none was more furious than that party whose chosen lifework it was to cherish and preserve the law as the only source of their race's salvation, the centre of all its trust and hopes. The persecution was Pharisaic. Under their leading, Jesus' prophecy was now in the fair way of being fulfilled: 'The son would rise against the father, and the father against the son.' The most zealous set out with letters from the Sanhedrim, hunted the suspected stirred up the populace, until family ties were disregarded,

and incited the local courts to institute inquiries and inflict penalties.

But this very conflict which burst upon the Church led to its greatest advance. The Acts tells us how the persecution resulted in its extension throughout the country, and afterwards beyond its bounds. We have reason to suppose that even before this the mission had been carried on outside of Jerusalem, but nothing could have promoted its objects more strongly than the persecution that now began against it. Much more important must have been its influence on the inner life. The uprising of Judaism against the Christians forced them to take up an independent position. They saw themselves for the first time persecuted in name of the law, and the light then dawned upon them that, as a matter of fact, the law was no longer to them what it was to the rest. Their hope was in the coming kingdom of heaven, and in that kingdom it would no longer be the law, but their Lord, from whom they should expect their salvation. This thought was already present in their minds. Only we must not examine the state of belief in this earliest period under the idea that the question had been put before the Apostles, as to whether they could enter the kingdom of heaven without circumcision, or whether faith in Jesus was sufficient, with or without the observance of the law. Such questions occurred to them neither in practice nor in theory. But although they were Jews, and although the law, which, indeed, their Master had not annulled, inevitably applied to them, this did not preclude a change in their thoughts and feelings with regard to it—a change caused by their faith in the Master and their hopes in the kingdom. There is an inner freedom which may grow side by side with an allegiance fostered by birth and custom, prejudice and piety. But men first become conscious of this freedom when a demand is made that restricts it, or when it is assailed on account of some consequence already deduced from it by the enemy, but not as yet patent to the mind that cherishes it. We do not know whether Stephen stood alone or had a party in the Church at his side. But, in any case, Jesus

prophecy of the fall of the temple existed. It withheld none of His followers from their allegiance to the temple, or from its duties; nor were they conscious of any inconsistency. But when, for the sake of the temple and the law, the attempt was made to forbid their faith in their Lord's sayings, the contradiction was obvious. Now, for the first time, they were compelled to realise it, and it initiated a series of reflections which ended in the question, Of what value is the law?

We may conjecture rather than prove from our authorities what took place in the Church in this connection. The most urgent question is as to the position held in reference to it by Peter, the undisputed head of the community, and this is one which history enables us to answer at least approximately. Paul tells us that, in the dispute which he had with Peter so much later in Antioch, he appealed to the opinion and position adopted by the latter in relation to the law, independently of and clearly long before their understanding. The only possible dispute was as to the inferences to be drawn from them. The confidence with which Paul makes the statement must be ascribed to the fact that his information rested on his intercourse with Peter. Now, in Gal. ii. 15 f. we have the words: 'We are Jews in any case, and therefore not sinners like the Gentiles. But why have we nevertheless as Jews adopted faith in Christ? Because we recognised that we were not justified by the works of the law. In this our faith was to aid us.' It would certainly be wrong to suppose from this that Peter shared in Paul's theory of the impossibility of being justified by the works of the law, as wrong as to imagine that Paul assumed, in the same sense as Peter, that the Jews as such were not sinners like the Gentiles. But Paul could appeal to Peter's conviction, long since arrived at, that his faith in Christ would be unnecessary, would be unfounded and insecure, if the law and its observance were perfectly sufficient to obtain justification before God. To recognise this was by no means inconsistent in itself with a sense of the obligation to observe the law; it still remained an advantage to be a Jew and not a heathen. For the present no

conclusion was drawn that bore on the obligation of the Jew to the law. This continued in spite of his trust being based upon Christ. But the future, the salvation to be obtained in the kingdom itself, could no longer rest upon the obligations of the law. Now, it was this belief that Paul unhesitatingly presupposed as having long since dawned on Peter, and as having become for him a determining conviction. It is obvious, however, that nothing was so likely to create and strengthen this conviction as Pharisaic attacks prompted by the view that faith in Jesus and in His kingdom was prejudicial to the inviolable duration of the law and to the belief in its power to secure salvation. The persecution therefore liberated the Christian faith; it was the means by which it came to a knowledge of itself. And in this sense it was not without its fruits in the primitive Church.

In discussing the evidence that the position taken up by Stephen was not isolated nor without results, another name demands our attention. The same Barnabas who early took a prominent place in the primitive Church, though, as a Cyprian, he belonged to the Hellenists, is so mixed up with the early history of Paul as to suggest, at least, that when he met him he was already prepared to adopt his standpoint.

But even if we disregard this inner effect, the line of thought originated by it, and its liberating force, yet the external effect of the persecution remains. It compelled the Christians to take up a position of their own. Although the members of the early Church might still cherish the feeling that they formed a Jewish brotherhood, yet the established and ruling Judaism had rejected their faith. And this rejection was for them the first step on their way to a separate religious constitution.

#### § 4. *Agrippa I.*

Time was given the Church in which to gather strength, for the persecution was not maintained with the energy of the first onset. As usually happens when attempts are made to suppress

a creed, the measures adopted were imperfectly carried out, and their execution was fitful. But the hostility continued, and no one could count at any moment on security. When Paul, some years later, came to Jerusalem for the first time, it was certainly with the sole intention of making the acquaintance of Peter, and of coming to an understanding with him. James was the only other member of the Church in Jerusalem whom he saw. The fact that he was not presented to the Church at all shows clearly that complete secrecy was an urgent necessity at the time. The anxious times of oppression were not yet over. And once more there was an outbreak of hostility, a persecution leading, as in the case of Stephen, to death, when the other James, the son of Zebedee, was executed.

The author of the Acts gives only a very brief account of this deed of blood (xii. 1 ff.). The fact was all he had it in his power to relate. But there is another reason for his cursory treatment of the incident; it is his usual practice only to dwell on the events connected with one or two prominent individuals whom he has specially selected. Even John, who was ranked with Peter as a pillar, is hardly more than mentioned. So now the narrative returns at once to Peter. For he too was struck at. He also was to be sacrificed; he was put in prison; but he succeeded in making his escape. This could only, it seemed to the Church, have happened by a miracle: an angel, as tradition had it, had delivered him. The present attack on the Church, which aimed at its destruction by the removal of the heads, and was therefore a wholly different kind of persecution from the almost accidental execution of Stephen, was directed by a new ruler. Once more the Romans had interrupted their direct administration of the country. Agrippa I., the grandson of Herod the Great, had spent an adventurous youth, and had courted, with varying degrees of ill-fortune, the favour of successive emperors, but at last he had succeeded in obtaining from Claudius the right of sitting as ally of Rome on his hereditary throne. As on the one hand he needed all his diplomacy to maintain his position at Rome, so it was



necessary also for him to be rooted in the popular favour of the Jews. No other motive can be imputed to this prince for his meddling with the Christians than the desire to secure popularity. The party of the law may have brought pressure to bear on him. They may have thought that the restoration of an independent sovereignty would enable them to free themselves from the presence of the sect, without requiring to observe or submit to the restrictions of Rome. We have, it is to be admitted, no information about this procedure of the prince against the Church except what is contained in the Acts. On the other hand, Josephus describes all the more vividly how anxious he was to conciliate the Jews, and especially to prove by all the means in his power his zeal for their religion. In the choice of means he was, as his whole life would lead us to expect, utterly unscrupulous. Peter accordingly escaped death by flight. Delivered from prison, he took time to visit a few of his fellow-Christians who were congregated by night, and in the strictest privacy, in the house of the mother of a certain John Mark, but no place in Jerusalem was any longer safe, and he therefore left the city. Since concealment was his object, the name of the place to which he had first gone was unknown even in later times, and all that the Acts can say is that he went elsewhere. This appeared so remarkable in the second century that the words were supposed to indicate, not only his journey to Rome, but even his suffering there. Whether the Church had anything further to endure from the measures of this prince we do not know. Perhaps he actually confined his attacks to the heads of the community. Perhaps with his well-known caprice he suddenly gave up the work he had undertaken. In any case, the Church was soon afterwards delivered from all danger from that direction, when, as the Acts relates, the sudden death of Agrippa at Cæsarea in 44, also recorded by Josephus, immediately followed the flight of Peter. The event had, however, other consequences than deliverance from the hand of the tyrant. The Romans did not continue the new order of things after him. They took the administration of the country once more into their

own hands, the procuratorship was re-instituted, and we have every reason to believe that distrust prevailed and that the reins were drawn tighter. These were not conditions under which it would be easy for the Jews to establish the authority of their religious courts. And so the period of persecution came to an end. The cause of suppression had made little way, but the inner development of the Christian Churches had gained infinitely.

## BOOK II

### THE APOSTLE PAUL

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE APOSTLE'S VOCATION

##### § 1. *His Conversion.*

AFTER the death of Jesus thousands of Jews abandoned their religion and believed on Him, becoming members of His Church. This transition, no matter under what conditions it may have been made, involved a great resolve. But every other instance is overshadowed by that of Paul. In his case we have not merely the turning-point in the life of an individual, but at the same time an epoch of inestimable importance for the cause itself, for the Church, and for Christianity. Paul may not have been the only one who had before his conversion opposed and persecuted the followers of Jesus. But his was no mere change of creed. For he became at once the most active of the promoters of the faith. He took his place at once by the side of those who, from their past history, their relations with the Founder, and their tried character, were looked upon as the pillars of the community. He was able to assert an equal right to the name of an apostle, of an ambassador of Jesus. And by his services this faith of a Jewish brotherhood became the universal religion. For the conversion of Paul can hardly be distinguished in point of time from the beginning of his enterprise as the Apostle of the heathens, and, in respect of the movement of thought, the two events coincide.

Great religious changes are to a very large extent the work of a

moment. This statement is true of the awakening, *i.e.* the beginning, of a religious life in general, or the recovery from a dissipated or vacuous existence. It is equally true of conversion conceived of as a change of tendency, the entrance on a path that leads in a contrary direction to that followed hitherto. In the consciousness of the moment is contained the belief in a higher power which draws the man to itself, the deepest and most personal thought of religion, the assurance of an act of Divine grace. Even if no such crisis is at once apparent, it is necessary to look for one, to bring to the surface a point of time, an event, in which the manifold lines of the outer and inner life meet and unite to form an all-powerful bond. Conversion is in this sense a miracle, the genuine and only miracle that belongs to the faith, which in itself is the experience in an immediate form, and from that fact derives its certainty that the experience has had a Divine origin. Here we have also the limit of historical inquiry, the limit to all explanation. The experience of the convert is known to himself only as an experience that has taken possession of him. It is to him a revelation, and only as a revelation can it be known and described.

It is in the highest degree probable that in the two names which he bore we possess a memorial of the change which cut the life of Paul in two. In his letters he himself always employs the Roman name, Paulus. The Acts names him Saulus, when he is formally addressed, Saul (ix. 4, 17), up to the point where he is introduced as Paulus, the Apostle of the Gentiles (xiii. 9), and the latter name is retained to the end, except in two places, where, in the history of his conversion, Christ's words are repeated—xxii. 7 (13), xxvi. 14. We can only see in this the evidence of a twofold tradition, the one Jewish-Christian, the other Pauline. The Acts has clearly no authoritative information regarding the adoption of the new name, and its suggestion that the meeting with the pro-consul Sergius Paulus occasioned it is at the most a conjecture. It is most probable, however, that the name was assumed in order to mark the Apostleship to the Gentiles. We need not for this

reason suppose that the new name had any special meaning. Of the double names which occur in this earliest Christian period, the instance that furnishes us with the best parallel is probably that of John Mark (Acts xii. 12, 25).

We learn from the Acts that Paul belonged to Tarsus (ix. 11, 30, xxii. 3), a statement which need not be doubted, because afterwards the same authority represents him as living there under circumstances that are open to question. On the contrary, the fact that Tarsus was his home most likely gave rise to these narratives (ix. 30, xi. 25). At the time when he makes his appearance in history he lived in Jerusalem. Whether he had been the pupil of Gamaliel (xxii. 3) may be left undecided. His persecuting zeal does not agree with the attitude towards Christianity which the Acts itself ascribes to that teacher (v. 34).

## § 2. *The Accounts of Paul's Conversion.*

In the letters of Paul which we possess he has spoken three times in all of his conversion or transition to Christianity. In these passages he does not indeed set himself to narrate the event, but discusses it in relation to his main subject, and in connection with other details. The letter to the Galatians contains the most important and instructive statement. But even there, what he says about his becoming a Christian is only subsidiary to his real purpose, which is to show how he became an Apostle. His opponents in these Churches had alleged that he was no genuine and therefore independent Apostle, and that he could only maintain his position by everywhere taking his cue from the people, above all, in the place in question, from the early Apostles. He leads up to his comment on this objection in the heading of his letter, where he does not simply designate himself an Apostle, but gives a definition of the term—'not of men, nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ' (i. 1). To this definition corresponds closely what he afterwards says concerning his gospel: 'It is not after man—for I did not receive it from a man, nor was I taught it, but by a revelation



of Jesus Christ' (i. 12). Not only does he disown any human appointment to the Apostolate, but even such human intervention in the way of instruction as might have prepared him to take up his vocation. His Apostolate was much rather the immediate effect of a revelation of Jesus Christ. But since this was equally true of his gospel, and he emphatically disowns any secondary source for it, then it is self-evident that what he says applies not only to his apostleship, but at the same time to his becoming a Christian, or, in other words, to the reception of the gospel. To this personal aspect of the matter applies especially his declaration that he had received no instruction from man concerning Christ. His words are so definite that they preclude any previous direct intercourse with Christians. Accordingly we cannot suppose that he had from intercourse with them acquired an intimate knowledge of their faith, and that this, though without effect for the moment, had on further reflection won him over to their cause. The description he goes on to give of his relations with Peter and the other Apostles (i. 17, 18) undoubtedly presupposes that he had not previously been acquainted with a single member of their whole company. It is of course self-evident that he was not without information as to the doctrine of the Christians; but he had not obtained it from them, and for this very reason he leaves it wholly out of account when in later times he reviews his experiences. The information had only tended to incite and embitter him against the sect. They rejected the tradition of the fathers, and that was enough to convince him that they must be extirpated. But since instruction from the Christians themselves was excluded, then to his mind something else was excluded. He was not conscious of any exertion of his own judgment, of any independent examination of the faith, or decision upon it. He knew of no transition stage in which his mind hesitated and questioned. On the contrary, the period of persecution was immediately followed by that of his belief and Apostleship. The revelation which he received was therefore no mere confirmation of a tendency already present in his thought,

it was not the last stage of a gradually emerging faith; but he remembered it as breaking in upon him suddenly and unexpectedly, and at once deciding everything for him. 'When it pleased God . . . to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles' are the words in which he briefly describes the event that made him at the same time a Christian and an Apostle. God first revealed Himself in him, that then by his preaching He might be revealed among the Gentiles (*ἐν ἐμοὶ — ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν*, i. 16). God inaugurated this revelation in his person; it was meant in its consequences to benefit the great Gentile world. No hint is given in these words of the nature of the revelation; but we can adduce the superscription of the same letter. When he defends his apostleship, which he received 'not from men,' by asserting that it was bestowed on him by Jesus Christ, and God the Father who raised Him from the dead, the last clause is not emphasised simply because it was a fundamental article of his faith. The fact thus cited clearly stands in a closer relation to the proof of his Apostleship. The resurrection was of central importance in the incident of his call to be an Apostle. It was the direct means of his call, and the purport of the words can only be that he had been convinced by the resurrection. Quite in the same way the explanation or appendix to the initial greeting (i. 4) gives us a further hint as to the significance and value he attached to his conviction that Jesus had risen. In the light of the resurrection the death of Jesus was redemptive, and thus at once declared our deliverance from the whole misery of this present world. When we compare this with what he says about his previous life as a persecutor, we come to the conclusion that he had been no mere slave of tradition, that he had been animated by something else than the usual blind zeal for the law. Despair of the present, a hopeless recognition of the wretchedness of the age, had taken possession of his mind and heart.

The letter to the Philippians (iii. 4 ff.) presents us with a parallel. In this passage, as in the last, Paul does not relate his conversion, he only alludes to it, because the reference seems to

be called for by his argument. In this instance it is not his Apostleship that is being discussed, but his opponents' grounds for boasting. If these were worth anything, then he could apply them to himself, or even make good higher claims than theirs. Not only was he as truly as any of them a genuine Jew, circumcised, an Israelite, a Benjamite, a Hebrew; but he was also a Jew in the sense of the law. Tried by its standard, he was without blame, a Pharisee, and for that very reason a persecutor of the Christian Church. But all this was valueless. He had recognised the worthlessness of all that these men gloried in, and to his mind the truth of the gospel rested on the conclusion he had thus arrived at. He had learned, he continues, to count it all as loss. He had once for all abandoned it, and now in his eyes it was so much rubbish. It was necessary to give it up in order to have Christ. His object was still the same as formerly. He had desired to be just, and he still desired it. But the paths of then and now were mutually exclusive. The righteousness which he had sought in the law was not compatible with the righteousness of God which is won through faith in Christ. Therefore he had given up the former to obtain the latter. To know Christ was to know the power of His resurrection, just as it was to know the fellowship of His sufferings. Where this was realised the way was open by which each would secure his own resurrection through Him. The incident of his conversion is only alluded to. But the reference is in complete agreement with the statement of the Galatian letter, inasmuch as the change was sudden, and the transition from the old conception to its opposite was so abrupt that there was no connecting link, no *via media* between the two. For this reason no expression seemed to him emphatic enough to show how completely he had once for all abandoned that in which he had till then prided himself and trusted, and how overpowering had been the knowledge that had produced this effect. If, then, the revelation which accomplished this is not also expressly discussed, yet a revelation, an immediate and all-powerful perception, it can only have been that

is indicated in the words of the Apostle as the cause of his change.

Now in the third statement of the Apostle (1 Cor. xv. 8 ff.) it is precisely this determining impulse, the revelation he had received itself, of which the Apostle speaks. Even here the narrative is not told for its own sake, but in connection with another matter. Paul is stating the proof of the fact of Jesus' resurrection. This he does by enumerating the manifestations through which the risen Christ had convinced those who witnessed them of the truth. His own vision was the last. What it meant for him is in this connection self-evident. Every one to whom Christ had appeared owed to the experience all that he became. It was the beginning of a new life. And so it was for Paul. But yet he was among them as one born out of due time, for, while all the rest had reached the goal after a normal and natural preparation, his path had been abnormal, for his call had come to him while he was a persecutor. His experience had indeed been far the most important in its results. He had wrought more than they all. Nay, in him the grace of God, the essence of the gospel, had given the mightiest proofs of its presence. But yet his past clung to him, and never ceased to humble him. Thus the character of the change is defined as in the Galatian and Philippian letters. The abrupt contrast between the period of persecution and his new life as a believer proves here also the overmastering nature of the event.

### § 3. *Antecedent Conditions.*

What Paul tells us in all these passages regarding his conversion we must accept. He is of course the best witness we could have, but here he is our only one. We must not forget, however, that he presents the incident to us as it appeared to him after a series of years. The memory retains what is striking and essential, subordinate details become fainter in time. This is especially the case with respect to the decisive moments of life,

and above all those of religious transition. The more the mind is engrossed with the present, so much the easier will its past become strange to it. It has pushed it aside. It is as the past night to us now that the day has come. There is no connecting link between them. What took place then belongs to the region of the marvellous. If the new life in us has since its germination produced rich fruit, has developed into fulness of knowledge, all this seems to belong to the first awakening. Our gains since seem to be inseparable from that first moment. In our present state of mind all seems to have been ours from the first. We must keep all this in view, and endeavour to look at the incident in the light of it.

The Apostle's description of it is not to be questioned. It is here mirrored in his consciousness, but it rests on facts. It is perfectly certain that no course of instruction by Apostles or Christians of any order preceded his conversion. It is certain that he persecuted the Christian Faith because he regarded it as incompatible with the maintenance of the law and of the traditions. It is also certain that it was a manifestation of Christ which first and of itself brought him to believe in Christ, and that this was not preceded by any preliminary stage of inclination towards the teaching of Jesus, or of wavering between the two parties. But if we must not attempt to analyse the supreme cause of the change into a series of petty reflections and impulses on his part, yet we are not precluded from seeking the historical explanation of it in his speculations as to Christianity, and the only question for us now is therefore whether or not we have in his description of his conversion sufficient material for determining the state of his mind while he was persecuting the Christian faith.

His first and confessed reason was indisputably his zeal for the law. Christianity was judged by, because of, its attitude to that. That he regarded the gospel as a rebellion against the law is explained by two circumstances. First, he had become a persecutor because of the accusation made against Stephen. In the second place, it must be remembered that he neither knew the



first Apostles nor could have had any accurate knowledge of their affairs. All the more easily might his suspicion, if once aroused, lead him to judge the whole movement by its presumptive consequences.

But with zeal for the law the rejection of faith in Jesus went necessarily hand in hand. A doctrine of the Messiah that seduced men from the law could not be true. For the righteousness enjoined in the law of necessity led to the kingdom of God. We can still discover in its essential features the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah formerly held by Paul. Among the grand divine privileges of the Israelitish people he reckoned that from it the Christ according to the flesh was to come; that He was to be of the lineage of David and to live under the law (Rom. ix. 5, i. 3; Gal. iv. 4). These ideas he did not first obtain from the Christian faith; the fulfilment of these conditions rather became for him later a proof for this faith. But that was not all. He believed that Jesus was the Messiah from the moment he became convinced that Jesus had risen. Not only was thereby the offence of the cross, which he had felt like other Jews, taken away, in so far as by the resurrection God had declared for this man. The event showed him what the crucified one was,—namely, the Son of God, who as such essentially belonged to another order, to another sphere than that which he called the flesh. By the resurrection He was proved to belong, as the Son of God, to the sphere of spirit, that of the spirit of holiness. As by His birth through His descent from David He entered into the world of the flesh, so by His resurrection He was shown to belong as God's Son to the sphere of the spirit. That was Paul's belief now. But that the certainty of the resurrection of Jesus produced this faith in him shows that the condition was thereby fulfilled which he had laid down in his own mind as to the Messiah. The Messianic faith which as a Jew he cherished necessarily included in itself the conviction that the Messiah as Son of God was to belong to a higher spiritual order, and prove Himself to be so. How he in his Judaic period pictured to him-

self the manner in which the true nature of the Messiah was to manifest itself in His earthly life we cannot tell. But certainly he did not think that Jesus was declared (*ὁρισθεὶς*, Rom. i. 4) by God through His life and death to be the Son of God with power. This belief was to him then false and pernicious.

The disposition which possessed him was thus quite upright; his zeal bears the impress of an irresistible passion. But the very violence of this passion shows there was a conflict within. What its nature was we may conjecture. Nay, it lets itself be seen. When the Apostle at a later period in his life describes the spiritual content of his faith in contrast to the discord of a life still unredeemed, he certainly did not discover that discord then for the first time, but he has discovered the true reason for it. The fact itself he has however taken from memory. The startling description which Paul (Rom. vii. 7 ff.) gives of the condition of man under the law, the representation of the paradox that the holy law does not make holy, but by its command awakens and quickens sin, the cry of misery under the power of sin which cripples the will and holds it a prisoner under the law—this is not to be considered as a manufactured system of doctrines, the result of general observation and inference. It is simply drawn from his own life. It is now a fact which he has come to understand since he obtained his freedom. But he had experienced what he now understands. No one could thus describe the discord who had not himself felt it. And no one could have felt it who had not striven with his whole power to satisfy the righteousness of the law. It was precisely the secret conflict which produced his zeal for the law and his bondage under it. The Apostle was therefore a Pharisee, but the righteousness of the law was to him a matter of conscience. And (Gal. v. 3) he expresses the cause of his trouble when he says: he who is circumcised is also under an obligation to do the whole law. Again, in his contest with the Judaistic proselytes and proselytisers, his reproach that they incurred such obligations so heedlessly, reveals indisputably how heavily it had once weighed upon him. He always opposed the re-introduction

of the law, not only because his watchword was faith in Christ's redemption, but because he had himself lived under it, and had felt in secret pain the impossibility of becoming righteous by its means. And Rom. ix. 31 gives the conclusion Paul drew from his experience: Israel which followed after the righteousness of the law did not attain to the law.

But even the Messianic hope of Paul's Pharisaic days cannot have given him unmingled satisfaction, it was rather the source of secret unrest. We at once think of the vexation he must have felt as he observed the urgency of one party for an insurrection against foreign rule, and the indifference on the other hand of the majority. But, even apart from this, his confidence in the hope was dependent on his view of the spiritual condition of the people, and therefore it was involved in his moral conflict. In the striking passage, Rom. x. 6, 7, the tone is one of despair, echoing as it does the fruitless quest for righteousness among the people: 'Say not in thine heart, Who will ascend to heaven? that is, to bring down Christ from above; or, Who will descend into the underworld? that is, to bring up Christ from the dead.' These questions, which employ words of Scripture (Deut. xxx. 11-14) proverbially, are not applied fictitiously, nor did they emerge first as taunts levelled at the Christians. On the contrary they are the expression of a doubting and despairing faith. And Paul has clearly indicated (x. 5, 6) that the doubt rose from the unsatisfactory issue of all efforts to observe the law. Further, we can perceive in another connection the struggle to maintain the Messianic hope in the early Jewish life of the Apostle. From his own retrospect we learn beyond the shadow of a doubt that at his conversion he was at once certain of his destination to be the Apostle of the Gentiles. And we are justified in concluding from this connection between his change of faith and the acceptance of his life-mission that his Messianic expectation had included an earnest hope for the ingathering of the heathen. Therefore his disquietude must have been all the greater when the sect so soon began to make its appearance abroad, where, in cities like Damascus, it could

only distract the heathen ; it is certainly significant that he turned his steps thither. But if the hope was not advanced by the strenuous practice of the law, if, on the contrary, the heathen world seemed more and more intractable, then in this respect also the faith of the recent convert brought him relief, for all at once he now saw the possibility of his hopes being realised.

#### § 4. *The Event.*

In spite of all this we have not reached the length of recognising the conversion of the Apostle as the result of a gradual transition. We have only been dealing with the actual conditions under which it took place. These conditions are simply the grounds on which he hated and persecuted the Christians. But it is easier for hate to metamorphose itself than for a vacillating inclination to come to a final resolve. The resolve itself is sudden, as we expect it to be, almost without exception, in religious changes. We must always assume, though we may not always be able to indicate, some determining circumstance which has caused it to take place at the precise moment. We have a hint of this in the present instance in the passage (Gal. i. 15), where the Apostle makes the call (*καλέσας*) through the grace of God precede the revelation of the Son in him. This can only be explained as the guidance by means of outward events that, closely related to the main experience itself, obtained from their position the character of a sign. But Paul describes what then took place and originated his faith (1 Cor. xv. 9) in this way. The risen Christ showed Himself to him, revealed (*ᾤφθη*) Himself. With this Gal. i. 16 agrees : ‘ it pleased God to reveal Christ in me.’ And if we thus reach an actual seeing, we are also led to a conjectural hearing, because this revelation at once involved as its object and consequence Paul’s mission as preacher from henceforth to the Gentiles. When he saw Him he was at once convinced that the Christ whom he had till then despised, the Crucified, lived and was the Son of God ; in other words, what he had seen and heard was just an

expression of the faith therein which at the moment overpowered him. That precisely the same thing occurred to him, who had not known Jesus, as to the early Apostles, only shows us that we are dealing in none of these instances with the physical perception of a definite human form. The Apostles and Paul were alike prepared for the vision by the direction of their whole thoughts to Him whose crucifixion the former deplored, and the latter, without being able to deny the consequences connected with it, despised. History can only establish the sudden change of mind; in doing so it remains wholly within the sphere of the experience.

When we try to grasp the sense in which the revolution in his faith presented itself to the mind of the perplexed convert, we have one fact to guide us. Jesus, on whom he now believed as risen from the dead, was to him the man from heaven, and a deep gulf existed between the Christ thus determined to be the Son of God, and Him who had lived in the flesh. From this it follows that he did not see the latter, but what he did see we cannot discover, and certainly cannot describe. We can indeed still recognise in the narratives of the Acts the conception formed of it in the school of the Apostle. Now it is in any event significant that in all three what the eye beheld was merely a flash of light from heaven (ix. 3, xxii. 6, xxvi. 13). Nothing more therefore was required for the Christophany which, so far, presents a striking resemblance to the descent of the Holy Ghost on Pentecost, and to the luminous visions of God vouchsafed, as they themselves believed, to Jewish Rabbis. The additional feature, the voice which Paul heard, first specialises the manifestation. But in their simplest form the words express nothing but the conviction that it was Jesus with whom he had to do; they therefore simply state what was passing in his own mind. When to this is added in two of the narratives (ix. 6, xxi. 10) the direction to await and receive his calling in Damascus, while in the third (xxvi. 16 f.) this ordination proceeds from Jesus during the vision itself, this only proves that the description has been influenced throughout by the free reflec-



tion of the historian. The only fact historically certain is that on the way to Damascus (cf. Gal. i. 17) Paul witnessed this manifestation, and that he regarded it as a call from Christ and a proof of His resurrection. The narrative of the blindness which followed, and of its cure at the hands of Ananias, is transparently symbolical. In any case it is suggestive that Paul, according to Gal. iv. 15, seems at least in later times to have had a severe ailment in his eyes.

§ 5. *The Apostle to the Gentiles.*

Paul needed no special revelation to make him an Apostle. His vocation was determined when he resolved to be a Christian. Henceforward it was his duty to devote himself to the work in order to atone for his previous life as a persecutor. Christianity had so occupied his thoughts from the first that it was impossible for him now to maintain the attitude of a mere spectator. As he had staked his all in the endeavour to destroy it, he must, now that he was convinced of its truth, venture everything to lead it to victory. In truth it was for him an inner necessity to become, from a persecutor, not merely a believer, but an Apostle of the gospel. His life-task was not changed, but only his path: his character was not transformed, but his concentrated energy, his passionate and conscientious devotion to his calling passed with him into the new camp. He was a new and yet the same man. It was for the kingdom of God he had formerly fought, for the kingdom of God he continued to fight as the champion of his new faith.

The man and his past sufficiently explain why he felt himself called to be an Apostle to the Gentiles. He ceased to believe in the permanence of the law from the moment he adopted his faith in Jesus, because it was on behalf of the law that he had been a persecutor. Again, the success of the gospel in the Diaspora had formerly appeared peculiarly dangerous, and had called for his opposition in person, not merely for the sake of the Jews, but

because to his mind the destiny of Judaism in the Gentile world had been threatened. Now in the same sphere another mission offered itself to him, and this was his vocation. So we see again how the turning-point of his life was defined for him by his former thoughts and actions. The certainty of the Gentile gospel was, as it were, an inheritance from his past; it belonged to the man who had rejected the gospel for the sake of the law. And the whole greatness of this man revealed itself in this, that he did not, like most proselytes, pick a quarrel with those who were still in bondage to the law, but at once began to cultivate a mission-field for himself, where his experience could be tested and raised to the power of a fact.

§ 6. *The First Mission to the Gentiles.*

The Jewish Christian Church was only a few years old when the conversion of Saul its persecutor into a believer paved the way for a new development. That Church itself was for some years unaffected by the event. It grew under persecution; the Christians gathered together again, and took up their abode in Jerusalem. The Church suffered sadly again under Agrippa, but a third time revived; all this proceeded without that critical event touching itself, without any essential difference as yet manifesting itself in its own life. And yet throughout all this period there was actually existing side by side with this Christian community another, almost a new, Christianity. Three facts connected with the conversion of Paul must be considered by us as affecting this period and the relations of parties during it.

In the first place, there can be no doubt that the marvellous extension of the faith beyond the limits of Judaism—in other words, Gentile Christianity—was due to Saul, soon now to be called Paul, and to no other. If others contributed in any way to the furtherance of this work, their names are lost to us or have paled behind his. He alone is remembered by its members as the founder of the new Church. He is this not merely because he established his claims

to it by his teaching, but also because he was actually the pioneer in the movement. The proof that he was rests not merely on his own consciousness of it, but also on the great success of his labours and his tragic fate. And when the great innovation came to be discussed as a vital question it was he who defended it with the whole force of his individuality, and succeeded in gaining its recognition.

In the second place, Paul's new activity and its fruits followed immediately upon his change of creed. Not only did his new creed mark out for him his own vocation, and thus assure him of the aims of his faith, but he was unconscious of any interval between gaining and applying his knowledge, between intention and performance. And this is the view taken in the earliest narrative.

But when we glance at the next thirty years we are confronted by a striking and yet indisputable fact. While Paul's activity was universal in its aims, yet for almost twenty years its sphere was limited. The splendid history of the Pauline mission, its memorable journey through the Roman empire, the founding of its famous churches in the eastern provinces,—all this only began seventeen years after the commencement of his labours. This long period has therefore almost entirely disappeared from history. His work falls into two sharply defined periods, at one in their principles but very varied in the carrying of them out.

#### § 7. *The Three Earliest Years.*

Of the former of these periods we have no literary memorials from the hand of Paul, except a few recapitulatory sentences in his later writings. The second half of the Acts is entirely occupied with the history of the Pauline mission. But this part of the book also belongs exclusively to the second period. The author has incorporated in his narrative a few traits from that distant earlier period, and endeavoured to harmonise the relations of parties, but it is only with an uncertain hand. Jerusalem still

remains the central point in his representation; what concerns Paul is almost always woven into the history of the older Church.

For any certain knowledge of this earlier period of Paul's apostleship we have to depend entirely upon a few lines in the letter to the Galatians. They are all the more valuable in spite of their brevity, since the Apostle not merely mentions the important facts, but affirms the strict accuracy of his statements by the most solemn asseveration on oath of his truthfulness before God (Gal. i. 20). Such asseverations serve to establish truth in sacred matters.

In this passage he does not expressly say, but he clearly implies, that his conversion took place in Damascus. After this event he went from Damascus first to Arabia. Why, he does not say. The most probable explanation is that he was compelled by circumstances, by the dangers that at once threatened him on account of the step he had taken. Just as little do we learn as to his length of residence in Arabia. It is a mistake to suppose that he speaks of having stayed there for three years. He says: 'I went to Arabia, and returned again to Damascus. Afterwards, three years later, I went to Jerusalem.' From this it is clear that the three years do not refer to his stay in Arabia, but to the interval between his return to Damascus and his visit to Jerusalem. His journey to Arabia was therefore only a short episode. It would perhaps not have been mentioned but for the special connection to which it owed its significance. Paul declares that after receiving the revelation he did not consider it necessary to confer with flesh and blood, *i.e.* to obtain instruction or approval from any man whatever; he did not even turn to the older Apostles in Jerusalem. Therefore it occurs to him here. And in order to set it in the clearest light, he adds that instead of going to Jerusalem he went to Arabia, that is, in the very opposite direction, and far away from intercourse with those there; that, further, he had not even gone thence to Jerusalem, but back again to Damascus. Not till three years later did he resolve to proceed to Jerusalem. If no other explanation had been given we might have assigned the same

reason for avoiding the capital as we have already given for his temporary flight from Damascus. It would have been no light matter to come under the notice of the promoters of the persecution; it would not have been easy to avoid doing so. Nor on the other hand would he have been readily admitted to their society by his recent opponents and present fellow-Christians. But Paul suggests quite another reason for his conduct, one that exclusively influenced him. He purposely refrained for the present from turning to the earlier believers, because he did not wish to be placed in a false position. His meaning is fully expressed in the emphatic words: 'Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood,' *i.e.* in contrast with the revelation of Jesus Christ which he had received. To do so, he implies, would have been superfluous, it would even have been false. The earlier Christians could not add anything to what he had obtained directly from Jesus Christ, save what was merely human; and that was valueless. And this is certainly no mere general expression. He knew at the time that had he approached the leaders at once he would have come in contact with a spirit alien to his own. The apostolate to the Gentiles which he had adopted would have met with opposition. And further, while he had known Christ only in the Divine revelation, only spiritually, at Jerusalem personal and human reminiscences and relationships were honoured and revered. All this is included in the 'flesh and blood,' which is the expression for those relations that he desired and was convinced he ought to avoid.

But he could not long persist in doing so, nor was it necessary that he should. After three years had elapsed he went to Jerusalem and visited Peter, the foremost man in the Church, the chief of the Apostles and therefore of the authorities. Three years had therefore sufficed to remove the scruples of the earlier date. In other words, Paul could now take such a step without any danger of being put in the false position he had formerly sought to avoid. It is clear that this could only be the case because he had already in these three years thoroughly established his independence,



adopted a fixed position, and opened his active career. Here also the opinion is confirmed that Paul's work as apostle to the Gentiles followed immediately upon his conversion. Damascus must be looked upon as his sphere, without necessarily covering the whole ground of his activity. For that city is at first only mentioned as the point to which he returned after the Arabian episode. His visit to Jerusalem when the fitting time came needed no further explanation. The desire that constrained him to go there was most natural; the reason that led him formerly to suppress it had now ceased to exist; and there was no longer anything to restrain him. Still he acted even now with a caution that is perfectly intelligible. He did not yet seek to form an alliance with the Church in Jerusalem as a whole, nor even with its collective leaders, but only with Peter—him he desired to know. With him he spent two whole weeks, long enough to show us that they did not quarrel, but came to an understanding. How far their agreement went we first perceive, or rather infer, from after events, the later conference of the so-called Apostolic Council and the subsequent affairs in Antioch, and especially from the reproof delivered then by Paul to Peter. We will not be wrong if we assume as the point of agreement a declaration on the part of Peter, that even he believed on Christ because he was convinced that he could attain the righteousness of God through Him alone. But there was nothing in such an agreement to prevent them from holding and maintaining different views about the observance of the law, or from attaching a different significance to the preaching of the Gospel among the Gentiles. All the more must they have been at one as to the certainty that Christ lived and their confidence in the kingdom. But the meeting must have been fruitful to Paul in what Peter had to tell of the life and teaching of Jesus. We know what importance the latter at least had for Paul. To him it was the inviolable rule of life, afterwards applied by him in his mission and in the government of his churches, quite as well as it could have been in Jerusalem. We have no means of estimating the influence exercised on Peter by intercourse with a

believer whose conception of Christ was so wholly spiritual, and to whom therefore the new life was all in all. But without influence upon him this enfranchising spirit cannot have been. Yet how much there was still to overcome, how wide the gulf was between Paul and the Christian Jews in Jerusalem, may be seen at once in the fact that the intercourse between the two men was conducted in private. Paul did not even see any other of the twelve. Peter thought fit to take into his confidence none but James the brother of the Lord, and even with him Paul seems only to have had a slight acquaintance. Of the other members of the Church he did not meet one. Both must have held that any agreement with the Church was as yet out of the question. What took place at that time was therefore simply a personal interview, and for the rest it laid a foundation of expectations from the future.

#### § 8. *The following Fourteen Years.*

It is possible, although it is not stated in the Galatian letter, that from Jerusalem Paul went once more to Damascus. If he did, then the narrative contained in 2 Cor. xi. 32 f. should perhaps find its place here. The Apostle tells us that the ethnarch of king Aretas had caused the city to be guarded, in order to take him prisoner. 'Then they passed me through a little door, and let me down over the wall in a basket, so that I escaped out of his hands.' Of all the straits and persecutions mentioned by him, this is the only fact of which he gives a narrative; it must have had a special significance, and as this does not lie in the intensity of his sufferings, nor in the greatness of the danger, it must be found in the circumstances, in the crisis itself. Now, as Damascus was undoubtedly the starting-point of his career, then this incident was his deliverance from an attack which threatened to cut off that career at the outset, and it was also, as it were, the omen under which it began, both in respect of the danger and the deliverance. Thus then we would have an explanation of the prominence given by Paul to the event. But its date can by no means be determined

from the fact that Aretas the Nabatean prince had at the time an ethnarch in Damascus who was instigated by the Jews to persecute Paul. So far as this goes it remains possible that the flight from Damascus coincided with the first departure thence to Arabia, although this opinion is beset by greater difficulties. But his deliverance was equally significant in either case.

According to Gal. i. 21—ii. 1 the Apostle spent the next fourteen years preaching the gospel in 'the regions of Syria and Cilicia,' and during this time, in Roman territory, he must have remained unmolested. He does not mention any fixed place of residence, yet it is clear from what follows that Antioch was a seat of his labours, and indeed formed his headquarters; for it was not without reason that Antioch was visited by the Jerusalemites after the so-called Apostolic Council; there they sought nothing else than this Pauline Christianity. The expression, however, used by him of his residence in both provinces shows that the Apostle travelled in various regions. The choice of these was readily suggested. Syria was round the gates of Damascus, and Tarsus, his birthplace (Acts ix. 11, xxi. 39), was in Cilicia. It is more remarkable that he confined himself to them. It cannot be doubted that here he carried on his mission to the Gentiles, and founded Gentile-Christian Churches. 'Those in Jerusalem,' or rather the Christian Churches in Judæa, he says, 'learned at this time from hearsay that their former persecutor was now himself preaching the faith which he once destroyed.' And indeed he did preach it to the heathen. One of them, a Greek, Titus by name, he afterwards took with him and presented at Jerusalem, as though to give a specimen of the conquests then made. And Titus had not been circumcised, he had not been compelled to become a Jew in order to be a Christian. Paul received the Gentiles without imposing the law upon them; leaving their liberty untrammelled by it, because such freedom was an immediate consequence of their faith in Christ, and was necessary for the great work of the conversion of the Gentiles. And he was not the only one who adopted this view and practice in carrying

on the mission. He mentions one comrade, Barnabas, a Jew like himself, who afterwards represented Gentile Christianity with him at Jerusalem, and, according to his own account, on an equal footing. But other Jews also took part with him. When at the close of those fourteen years the conflict arose in Antioch, it is evident that, apart from the new-comers from Jerusalem, there were Jews who had till then lived in the Gentile Christian Church, and had without repugnance joined with believing Gentiles at the common table (Gal. ii. 13): although they now permitted themselves to be led away by the envoys of James. This union had perhaps been Paul's greatest achievement during the period we are discussing, and may explain why he had so long confined his activity to so narrow a field. However broad and free his principles, it was from the nature of the case not yet possible to construct one Church, much less a union of Churches, out of purely Gentile converts, by simply gathering the Gentiles together. Paul declares that at the close of this period he went to Jerusalem, full of anxiety lest his whole procedure should be and continue fruitless, and in these words he shows us unmistakeably the goal to which his thoughts had till then pointed as he followed his isolated path. He hoped for and he believed he required recognition in the interests of his own work. The faith in one God, in His creative work, and in His judgment,—faith in redemption from sin through Christ and in Christ's kingdom,—could only be the religion of a Church with the whole background of its historical presuppositions in Israel. The Church needed the sacred writings, and it was impossible that a society of Greeks, but a few days old, should, with no tradition to guide them, have mastered and learned to live by them. But by himself alone Paul could not supply this defect. Therefore it was necessary there should be Jews also in his Church. His aim from the beginning was necessarily to form a universal brotherhood of believers living in perfect freedom. At first he could only of course plant free Churches side by side with those that in Judæa clung to the law, hoping that the fruits of their faith exhibited by the former would prepare the way for

union. Then when he appeared before the Church in Jerusalem he was in a position to point to an accomplished fact. But he had waited and worked for this moment through the whole period. His action had been perfectly independent, but he had always looked steadily in the direction of Judæa and Jerusalem. In comparison with his later period, the restless wandering, the bold advance, and the astonishing successes in distant lands, his work was for the present almost still and retired. And yet in significance and greatness it was hardly inferior. We know that the recollection of separate details has faded. But this laborious work was the firm foundation of all that followed. It gave the lasting proof of the truth of his principles; the proof that his work was divine.

And even before the treaty with the Church in Jerusalem he obtained one result which was almost as great as the work itself. He accomplished it unattacked, unopposed. This Gentile Christianity sprang up, and took a firm hold, without interference from Jerusalem. The Christians of Judæa could not remain ignorant of it. They heard what had happened,—the fact, to them inconceivable, that the persecutor had become a preacher of their faith. It was precisely what they could not understand that led them to look favourably on the work. ‘They praised God on my account,’ says Paul, since this marvel led them to the belief that the hand of God was in it. That was enough to determine their peaceful, expectant attitude, even when they perceived things in his conduct which they could not approve. More than that we need not suppose. There is no hint of any sanction being given to his practice. No word reached him that could assure him of that, nothing that could justify him in supposing that his procedure would be confirmed. It was he himself who resolved in his own mind to have the situation at length cleared up. This waiting on both sides could not but lead to a strained feeling that for him grew intolerable. It was not that he had any doubt about his work, but there was the question whether he could expect its recognition at headquarters, or whether he was in the end to look for a verdict that all his efforts had been wrong, and his task in vain.



§ 9. *The Account of the Acts.*

Besides the narrative given by Paul of this earlier period of his activity, we possess yet another account, that of the Acts. It is self-evident that it cannot be used to correct the former, the only question is whether it may not supplement it. We have however not only to consider what the Acts tells us of Paul, but all that it relates of the period; since this in part affects precisely the most important circumstances in the history of the Apostle himself.

The Acts mentions Saul for the first time at the stoning of Stephen, where he appears not merely as a participator, but almost as a leader (vii. 58-60); and it further mentions at the close of this passage (viii. 3) that after the death of Stephen he became a voluntary agent, so to speak, of the inquisition, and inflicted severe losses on the Church in Jerusalem. It then follows first the fortunes of the Church during its dispersion, and only afterwards returns, in a new section, to Saul and his history. It relates the conversion of Paul by the vision when on his way to Damascus, provided with a commission to continue his inquisitorial task among the Jewish population in that city; we then have the closing scene of the conversion in Damascus, and the part played in it by Ananias the Christian. The incident is immediately followed by the succeeding adventures of Saul. He remains at first in Damascus (ix. 19 ff.), and appears at once in the synagogues to preach the truth that Jesus is the Son of God. The Jews present are at first confounded by his words; but soon they recover themselves, plan to destroy him, and watch the gate of the city to prevent his escape. But he escapes, and that in the manner described by the Apostle in the second Corinthian letter. Thereupon the fugitive proceeds at once to Jerusalem. The distrust he is there met with in the Church is removed by the intervention of Barnabas. Perfect harmony now exists between Paul and the Church there, but his public appearance as a Christian, especially among the Hellenists, again provokes attempts on his life. From

these he is saved by the Christian Church, and is conveyed to Tarsus (ix. 26-30). With this the section ends.

Even if we remove its miraculous portions, we can hardly retain the part of this narrative that gives the history of Ananias's intervention in the concluding stage of Paul's conversion. The Apostle at least says nothing at all of any human instrumentality. He rather negatives it. The following narrative of Paul's appearance in Damascus up to his flight is in itself quite credible. But Paul, it must be remembered, tells us that he went immediately after his conversion to Arabia. Wholly erroneous, however, is the account of his journey to Jerusalem. The Acts makes it occur very early. His stay in Damascus lasts only a few days, when the resolve of the Jews to kill him is taken. And we thus come to the conclusion, that the journey is supposed to have been made, not after three years, as in the Epistle, but, in direct contradiction to the very definite assurance of Paul, at the beginning of that period. But even if we were inclined to take liberties with the words of the Acts, and to assign the journey to the close of the three years, in order to make its statement harmonise with Paul's version at least as to the date, yet the whole incident takes a form absolutely inconsistent with that which he declares before God to be the truth. In Acts he desires 'to join himself' to the Church; he himself says that he only sought to become acquainted with Peter. In Acts, the alliance is, after some difficulty, effected, and is followed by public action; he himself assures us that 'he got to know no one in the Church,' and that he continued for years to be personally unknown to the members. The narrative of the Acts is therefore as clearly and thoroughly as possible negated by Paul himself.

After Paul is brought down to Tarsus, the Acts returns in the next section to the Jewish Churches, or rather to the work of Peter at their head. The cure of a lame man in Lydda, and the raising of the dead in Joppa, form, however, only an introduction to the detailed account of the conversion and baptism in Cæsarea of the centurion Cornelius and his house, that is, of a heathen who,

without actually becoming a Jew, had attached himself as a proselyte, in the wider sense of the term, to the faith of Judaism. The event is followed by Peter's justification of it at Jerusalem. The whole narrative is without claim to historical value when compared with Peter's position as regards the same question at the Apostolic Council, and with the whole of the conditions under which he and the Church are represented at that time. Nor are we in a position to say whether the story is founded on a fact of a somewhat different complexion, whether Peter perhaps made some such individual a proselyte of the Church in the same sense as he had been hitherto a proselyte of the Jews, or whether, carried away by circumstances, he had in an exceptional instance gone perhaps further than his wont. Any opinion of the sort would, instead of explaining the incident, only distort it. For the meaning of the author of the Acts is perfectly unambiguous. According to him, the question whether the Gentiles were to be received without circumcision was solved on this occasion by Peter in such a manner as to open a new era; or rather it was a Divine dispensation that led up to Peter's solution. Peter thus recognised and carried out the principle of the free admission of the Gentiles, and obtained for it the authoritative approval of the Church in Jerusalem itself (xi. 18).

Now if the narrative which told us of Paul has been here balanced by a Petrine or Jerusalemite section, the author in pursuance of his design presents us with another passage in which the two spheres of Antioch and Damascus, and with them Paul and Peter with their further history, are interwoven. The first place is taken by the founding of Gentile-Christian, or rather of mixed, but at any rate free, Churches in Antioch, and by their close connection with the Church in Jerusalem (xi. 19-30). Then follow Agrippa's onslaught on the latter, James's murder, and Peter's miraculous deliverance (xii. 1-23); and at the close again a note that transfers us to Antioch, and at the same time establishes once more the connection between that city and Jerusalem (xii. 24 f.). For the history of Paul two points in particular fall to be

considered here. In the first place, it is stated that he became leader of the Church in Antioch (xi. 25); not, however, its founder. It was founded, that is to say, by fugitives from Stephen's persecution (xi. 19 ff.). It was Cyprian and Cyrenian Jews who first received Greeks, *i.e.* Gentiles, into the Church in that city. The work so begun is superintended from Jerusalem, and Barnabas is sent down for the purpose. He on his part thinks it best to recall Paul from Tarsus to settle matters, and thus gives the leadership into his hands. In the second place, Paul himself then re-enters into close relations with Jerusalem. For the Church of Antioch comes to the help of the brethren in Judæa during a famine that had been foretold by Agabus of Jerusalem. Paul conveys the contribution to the capital along with Barnabas (xi. 30), and they do not return to Syria until after Agrippa's persecution is brought to a close by his sudden death (xii. 25).

So far as the second journey to Jerusalem is concerned, the date is sufficient to show that it cannot coincide with either of those related in the Galatian letter. For it is not to be overlooked that the author assigns it to the time of Agrippa's death, and therefore to 44 A.D. Since he further identifies Agabus' famine as that which occurred under Claudius, and since Jerusalem, though not the whole world, as the prophet would have it (xi. 28), was in fact visited by such a calamity in 44, there can be no doubt about his chronology. But this would make the journey fall within the period of fourteen years, during which Paul assures us he was seen by no one in Jerusalem. There can be no question then of the famine giving any historical support whatever to the narrative as a whole. We must therefore in any case strike out this journey with its occasion and its end.

The next statement, which describes the founding of the mixed Church in Antioch, is on a somewhat different footing. According to it Paul had nothing to do with this Church at the outset. It was the work of some unknown Jews belonging to the Diaspora. As a rule, the fugitive Christian Jews had, even in foreign parts like Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, turned with

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the gospel to their fellow-countrymen alone (xi. 19). But some of them, the Cyprians and Cyrenians of the Acts, acted differently; thus it happened that in Antioch they addressed themselves to the Gentiles also, and that their efforts were successful (xi. 20). Hence Gentiles had been received into the Church without Paul's intervention, and before the days of his activity in Antioch. And it is quite clearly the meaning of the narrative that these Greeks did not first become Jews, but were admitted without having had to pass under the yoke of the law. Now the possibility of such a course of events cannot be disputed. This advance of the gospel beyond the limits of Judaism is not a mere fancy, it is not necessarily a fiction. It is a logical development, for it is involved in the very nature of the Gospel. Nor does it derogate from the splendour of the thought advocated by Paul, or his enfranchising action. Even if the narrative be accepted, his sole claim to have given form and stability to the movement is unimpaired. In the great crises of history inspired men are not belittled, because they express what is stirring in many minds, and is more or less clearly aimed at by others. Nor does it derogate from their fame that they are accompanied, or even preceded by, other travellers on the new path. And although Paul had doubtless companions in Antioch, like Barnabas, and other Jews of whose names we are ignorant, we are not forced *prima facie* to assume that from the first all of them simply trod in his footsteps.

But beyond this general admission of possibility we cannot go. When we examine the whole contents of the narrative its historical value shrinks until it reaches the vanishing point. No single detail is possible. That this Church in Antioch, so differently constituted, was, in its infancy, tended and presided over by that in Jerusalem, that Paul himself owed his position in it to the call of Barnabas, the commissioner of the mother Church, that he thus acted, as it were, as its deputy, is as entirely negatived by his own description of his relations with Jerusalem at the time, as the journey he is said to have made thither. According to the



Acts, his connection with Jerusalem was constant almost from his conversion, and was interrupted only by circumstances. There he bore his witness to the truth, and was merely sent away in order that his own safety might be secured. The moment had now come when he could be usefully employed elsewhere. Then ensued a period of brotherly intercourse; Jerusalem sent her prophets and Antioch her gifts, and a firm bond was woven between the two. Paul himself renewed his personal relations with the mother Church, staying once more with Barnabas in Jerusalem, and when they returned, John Mark, a member of the Church, accompanied them as a living pledge of the understanding to which they had come (xii. 25). And all this happened during the fourteen years in which, as we know from Paul, he was a complete stranger to the Church in Jerusalem, where only a distant rumour of his work had been heard, and when the peace observed by the leaders could not assure him that his whole work might not be pronounced worthless.

Through the whole representation of events there runs one distinct conception and purpose, which is most closely followed in those places where it has first to establish its authority in opposition to actual facts. Fact is contradicted when it is suggested that the free admission of the Gentiles was not a new thing, a practice which had to make its way in the teeth of Jewish Christianity, and that Paul was not its perfectly independent author and defender. Paul, according to this view, was no sooner converted than he entered the communion and passed under the protection of the faithful in Jerusalem. While he was quietly sojourning in Tarsus, the primitive Church, under the guidance of Peter, adopted the principle of the conversion of the Gentiles. Immediately afterwards the first great step was taken towards the erection of the Church in Antioch, and with this Paul had nothing to do. In this work he was only employed as a suitable agent, while the spiritual guidance came from Jerusalem, and Antioch gratefully reciprocated the love of the brethren. We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that, in a representation of events

where all the main features are novel or metamorphosed, it is no longer possible to eliminate, and to regard as historical, isolated features of a genuine tradition which may have been employed by the author. This is especially applicable to the note that after the new Church was established there, the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. It is not impossible that the name was invented for them in that city, and at an early date. Of course this implies that public attention had been drawn to them, and that even at that time they could no longer be well mistaken for Jews or reckoned with them. Such a supposition, however, is not necessarily involved in the adherence of individual Gentiles to an unimportant Church, at least so long as it was unaccompanied by the exclusion of believing Jews from all intercourse with their countrymen. Even this might have happened at that place, and at so early a time. But on closer examination the whole character of the statement and the doubtful nature of so many of its details suggest that the author first desired to tell of the origin of the name, and then assigned it to the time that seemed to him most suitable. He therefore mentions it where he recalls the first Gentile Christians, where accordingly, in his view, the most universal conditions existed. And the statement itself (xi. 26) bears the stamp of a studied purpose, suggesting rather the intention by this means to emphasise the moment than a historical reminiscence. When the Church was founded in Antioch, Christianity, according to this view, presented itself before the great heathen world, and the name that expressed its universal character therefore signalised the crisis.

For the rest, we cannot fail to observe in this trait the ceremonial character with which this book invests the whole early history of the Church. The Church in Jerusalem is set in the full light of publicity, and attracts universal attention from the beginning. In the same way she must now in the great heathen capital where a new era, a second founding, is allotted to her, form at once the centre of attention, and therefore receive the name that thus distinguishes her. And the same thought recurs

when Paul the new convert is drawn within the sphere of her authority, and everything continues under the higher influence of the primitive Church.

Paul tells us that for the first fourteen years he remained in the regions of Syria and Cilicia. Now his Syrian mission is at least indicated in the Acts, where he is brought from Tarsus to Antioch, and where, in the great deputation from the latter city to Jerusalem, he is permitted, along with Barnabas, to represent its Church. Up to this point Cilicia only appears in our book because the apostle's birthplace, Tarsus, is his place of refuge, but he is at least not known to have carried on any work in the province. Instead, we are now informed by the same authority of a missionary journey and enterprise conducted by Paul and Barnabas, or rather, in accordance with their rank, Barnabas and Paul, in company with John Mark, who had come from Jerusalem. It is not Cilicia indeed that is the scene of their labours, but after a short visit to the island of Cyprus, the neighbouring provinces of Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia on the mainland (c. xiii. xiv.). Not till later are Churches incidentally mentioned in Cilicia (xv. 23, 41), though without any account of their origin. Now so far as the mission in these lands is concerned, its history is indeed marked by various fabulous features, but the towns and routes cited point to a definite authority. On the other hand, the question arises whether the narrative is here introduced in its right place. And if we refer to Gal. i. 21 we must answer it in the negative. Paul would hardly comprehend these provinces under the name of Cilicia long after their formerly existing union with Cilicia had ceased for the Romans; and for this reason also we must take Cilicia, in the combination 'Syria and Cilicia,' to refer to eastern Cilicia alone. And the inference from Gal. ii. 5, that the Galatian Churches were already in existence at the time of the council at Jerusalem, is wholly superficial. On the other hand, there is no difficulty in explaining how the author of the Acts could come to transfer the section to this point. He shows in it how Paul in the course of his mission turned his attention to the

heathen, and also what success he achieved. In this way he leads up to the ensuing conference at Jerusalem, both as regards the complaint and the defence. And the less his sketch contains of Paul's activity in Antioch, the true source of the difference, the stronger was his motive to supply the defect in some such way.

§ 10. *Paul's Preaching to the Gentiles.*

JEWS AND GENTILES.

The mission to the Jews had a way ready made for it, even beyond the limits of Palestine, at least for every Apostle who was himself a Jew by birth. His nationality at once admitted him to the synagogue, but, apart from this, he was welcome to the hospitality of Jewish houses. And this led him beyond the ranks of his countrymen. In the synagogue he was listened to also by Gentile proselytes, and the result was to form personal acquaintanceships that might in turn bring him into relations with other Gentiles. According to the Acts, this was also Paul's experience almost everywhere; it was at any rate the normal course of events, in Pisidian Antioch (xiii. 14, 43, 46 ff.); in Iconium (xiv. 1 ff.); in Thessalonica (xvii. 2 ff.); Berea (xvii. 12); Athens (xvii. 17); Corinth (xviii. 4); and Ephesus (xix. 8 ff.). Quite as invariable was the result of his appearance in the synagogue; the majority of the Jews were soon transformed into enemies, and his visits to the synagogue therefore ceased; on the other hand, the proselytes exhibited a greater readiness to receive the gospel, and formed themselves into a Church which, though embracing Jews among its members, was yet mainly composed of proselytes and other Gentiles. We are told that in Corinth at this point Paul's addresses had to be adjourned merely to a neighbouring house, which belonged to Titius Justus, a proselyte (xviii. 7). Only in Athens and Ephesus was there any deviation from the usual order of procedure. In Athens the Apostle indeed appeared in the synagogue and addressed the Jews and proselytes, but

immediately afterwards, and without any intervening steps, he mingled with the men gathered in the market-place, and he therefore used the opportunity presented to him, as to any other philosopher, by the customs of the place. In Ephesus, seeing the synagogue to be closed against him, he, as in Athens, sought a chance of speaking in public; and he delivered his addresses in the school of Tyrannus (xix. 9), that is to say, in a hall suited for meetings, whether it was occupied by a lecturer, or had served already for other purposes. It is indisputable that we are once more confronted by doubtful features in the portions of the Acts that refer to this. Thus in Cyprus, Paul's speeches in the synagogue cause Sergius Paulus to send for him, and the latter becomes a believer, because the Apostle strikes his favourite, the Magian Barjesus, blind (xiii. 7, 12). Then in Pisidian Antioch, the synagogue, in which Paul speaks for the second Sabbath in succession, is crowded by multitudes of heathens (xiii. 44). In these instances we cannot but perceive that the custom of beginning in the synagogue, and of only then passing on to the heathens, is suspiciously uniform, and is connected with a dogmatic preconception on the part of the author. Besides, his representation is not consistent with the composition of the Church, at least in Thessalonica, as it is described in 1 Thessalonians. It is therefore all the more significant that he shows in certain cases how the Apostle, who regarded it as his peculiar vocation to bear the gospel to the Gentiles, was able to reach them without the intervention of Jewish proselytes, and, in order to do so, took advantage of such means as offered themselves naturally in the market-places and lecture-halls. The narrative suggests, rather than indicates, another means used by Paul: it mentions his meeting with Aquila and Priscilla in Corinth, and the business relations that followed it (xviii. 1 ff.). Of course these were Jews, but we cannot doubt that his trade helped him to form other connections.

When we consider the Apostle's own statements in his letters, we at once meet with many further traces of the fact that he



sought out the Gentiles and delivered his message to them at the outset, and that, for this very reason, his gospel was specially prepared for them. The Church in Thessalonica was altogether, or almost altogether, composed of Gentiles. In that town Paul wrought industriously at his trade along with his companions, in order to avoid the necessity of burdening any one (1 Thess. ii. 1 ff.). He did not adopt the attitude of an Apostle of Christ; he appeared everywhere without any assumption of authority, and merely as a man anxious for the welfare of his fellows; it was his whole endeavour to prove by his demeanour that he was neither a visionary nor a deceiver, whose object was to take advantage of other men. In this there is no word of preaching to the Jews, no word of any intervention on their part in the course of events. Paul certainly mentions (ii. 14) the persecution of Christians by Jews, but there he is referring to the one that took place in Judæa. He is drawing a parallel between it and that in Thessalonica, but in the latter place the persecutors are thought of as heathens, and heathens only. The Apostle, according to the reminiscences he here exchanges with the Church, had taken up his residence in the city, and had confined his plans to seeking and finding opportunities in his intercourse with the inhabitants of speaking of those things that prompted all his journeys. In another instance we see how he similarly founded a Church in a community wholly heathen, and how his doing so was merely caused by an accident. In the letter to the Galatians, namely, he reminds them that his first residence among them was forced upon him by illness; he had therefore only intended to travel through their midst (Gal. iv. 13 ff.). They had acted kindly to the sick stranger. And he had made good use of his time, telling them of his faith and inviting them to share in it, until, his inspiration kindling in spite of his wretched state, they thought his advent miraculous, and himself a messenger of God. They worshipped the man and listened to him. His relations with Corinth are not so clear and free from complication. Here Paul had apparently to do, not with heathens alone, but with Jews as

well. But if the description of his treatment of the two orders in 1 Cor. ix. 20 has any reference to events in Corinth, then it does not support the view that he had passed from the Jews to the heathens, but rather that he had gone to the two sections separately and independently. But everything which he tells us, or alludes to, in the early chapters of the first letter about his missionary period in Corinth, shows that the Jews occupied a very subordinate place in his work. If he says, 'The Jews ask for signs, and the Greeks seek after wisdom,' yet in what follows he only concerns himself with the demand of the latter (ii. 1 ff.). Thus he assures them that he had not come to them as a master of eloquence, that he had not desired to speak and convince in the language of the schools, the language of human wisdom, and therefore no man was justified in judging him by such a standard. And in the same way he tells how he had gone among them in great anxiety, plainly because he was well aware of the demands which the Greeks were in the habit of making in this respect. So far as regards individuals, Gaius, with whom Paul stayed at any rate on a later visit (Rom. xvi. 23), but with whom he was already on intimate terms during his first residence (1 Cor. i. 14), we are justified in regarding as a heathen. On the other hand, Crispus, whose name is coupled with that of Gaius in the passage last quoted, is stated in Acts xviii. 8 to have been a Jew. Again, we must regard Erastus as a heathen (Rom. xvi. 23), if only because of his post in the city; and so also Tertius, Paul's amanuensis, as well as Quartus, designated brother (xvi. 23 f.), simply because Lucius, Jason, and Sosipatros, already mentioned, are distinguished from them as Paul's compatriots (ver. 21). Of the latter, Jason apparently belonged, according to the Acts, originally to the Church of Thessalonica. Besides these, among those who adopted Christianity during Paul's first stay at Corinth, the Acts designates Sosthenes as a Jew (xviii. 17), and Titius Justus as a Gentile proselyte (xviii. 7). We are not informed as to the origin of Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, who (1 Cor. xvi. 17) came from Achaia to the assistance of Paul in Ephesus. From these

personal notices we learn nothing except what we have stated above, namely, that there were Jews also in the Corinthian Church. But it is unquestionable that, in the reminiscences of his first stay at Corinth, the Apostle strongly emphasises his relations with the Gentiles.

### § 11. *Polytheism and Monotheism.*

Now if Paul thus approached heathens who were unprepared to understand his message by a preliminary acquaintance as proselytes with Jewish doctrine, it is of the greatest interest to learn the form given by him to the contents of his faith, the gospel, and the evidence he offered in its support. We are on the very threshold of the great conquest of the world by Christianity. Here therefore are to be perceived the original motives and forces by which the victory was won. In the case of the Thessalonians Paul expresses the fact that they had become Christians in the single phrase, 'they believe in God,' and he adds the explanation: 'they have turned from idols to God, to serve the living and true God' (1 Thess. i. 9). But this is followed at once by a second result of their conversion, namely, 'to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivers us from the wrath to come' (ver. 10). We have here evidently a grouping together of the chief points of his whole doctrine. With the second part especially agree his words to the Corinthians in the first letter, where (xv. 3) he reminds them how 'he had declared to them the resurrection of Jesus first of all—*ἐν πρώτοις.*' For further illustrations of his procedure on this basis we can go to the Corinthian and Galatian letters, but the letter to the Romans also gives us some assistance, although the Apostle has no reminiscences of his own practice to impart. Instead, he confirms the faith of the Roman Gentiles by reminding them of their former and their present state.

In the first place, it is his object to prove that the gods of the heathens exist as such only in the thoughts of their worshippers,

and that, on the contrary, there is only one God. The gods whom they served once are not really gods (1 Cor. viii. 4). The service they had rendered them was a shameful subjection to the beggarly elements of the world, *i.e.* of the material world (Gal. iv. 9), and their worship had sprung from a blind and sensuous impulse (1 Cor. xii. 2). This character of the gods is clearly established by the fact that their worship is paid to the images of 'corruptible' creatures, not only of men, but also of all sorts of animals (Rom. i. 23 ff.). The idols however are dumb (1 Cor. xii. 2). Yet Paul does not say to the Gentiles that their gods are therefore non-existent, mere creatures of the imagination; they are real beings, only their sphere is the world: they are demons. 'There are many that are called gods and lords,' he says in 1 Cor. viii. 5, yet they are all, whether in heaven or on earth, merely gods so called, and contrasted with them, or rather exalted above them, there is only one real God. The sacrifice or service offered to idols is therefore null and void measured by the standard of Divine realities, yet the worshipper undoubtedly enters into communion with and passes under the influence of demons (1 Cor. x. 20). This explanation is quite consistent with the one given above, the connecting link being found in the thought that since demons are themselves the spirits of the elements, and as such belong to the material world, they can also for this very reason be worshipped in the form of animals.

In the letter to the Romans the existence of idolatry serves to establish the Divine retribution impending over men. Therefore it is brought into connection with the power of sin, in that it is the result of ingratitude to and alienation from God, and is in turn the cause of sin's deepest degeneracy, which again becomes its punishment. The progress of deterioration is thus completed in the three stages: the denial of God, the perverse practice of idolatry, and the unnatural forms assumed by licentiousness with the revolt from conscience in general (Rom. i. 21 ff.). Idolatry itself is thus with its folly the natural penalty of the denial of the knowledge of God. But what is here given by the Apostle as a

philosophy of history serves also necessarily to condemn the creed of heathendom. His scheme contains in its sketch of the folly of idolatry the evidence of its worthlessness; but it also contains the proofs of monotheism, since it depicts heathenism as a guilty denial of the monotheistic belief. But if the denial of monotheism implies guilt, then it must be possible to show that monotheism was held by or was natural to man, and thus we have the proof of the unity of God, of the existence of the living and true God. Here and in other places we have an indication of the manner in which the Apostle presented this proof to the heathen. The letter to the Romans contains a sketch of theology in two sentences: God is from His very nature invisible, but yet He is to be known, He has revealed Himself; more precisely, the revelation consists herein, that this Being makes Himself known to a thoughtful observation through His works. This power of knowing God dates from the creation of the world, and it still exists, because the world bears the impress of its origin (i. 19 f.). The same proof is indicated in a shorter form in 1 Cor. viii. 6, where, in opposition to polytheism, it is said, 'We have only one God, the Father, the Creator of all things.' But in the same letter we have a repetition of the argument contained in Romans, viz., that there is, or ought to be, a natural knowledge of the true God. The words are: 'Since amid the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God' (i. 21); the world therefore is amid wisdom, *i.e.* amid the order and revelation of wisdom, but this world, *i.e.* the world of men, has not entered into its secrets; it was in its power by wisdom to know wisdom, and it did not. Thus we come once more to the conclusion that the Divine revelation given through wisdom must always be attainable by reflection, and that therefore it is possible to derive from thought the proof of monotheism. Besides, in the Roman letter (i. 20) we have a further indication of the extent to which God, though invisible, is known in the works of creation. In other words, we perceive His creative power and Divine nature, *i.e.* the ungrudging nature of the Godhead, the beneficence that imparts its favours. And to these knowable qualities of God the argument of the first



letter to the Corinthians adds wisdom. The whole treatment of the subject in the Roman letter reminds us vividly of the judgment pronounced on heathenism in the Book of Wisdom, c. xiii., but whether Paul was acquainted with that book we cannot tell.

Now if we compare with the Apostle's own indications the fine survey of the world, and especially of history, from a monotheistic standpoint, ascribed to him by the Acts at Lystra (xiv. 15 ff.), and afterwards at Athens (xvii. 24 ff.), we must admit that the latter, whatever its source, also gives us a true idea of Paul's method and practice.

### § 12. *The Ethical Motives*

Furnished with all these proofs of the worthlessness of the gods and of the existence of the one living God, Paul, the ambassador of the gospel, addressed first the reason of the heathens, though at the same time he appealed to their sense of the dignity of man. But it was in his power also to make a direct appeal to the moral sense, and passages in his writings prove that he did. He did so, as in the passage in Romans where he condemns the heathen world, by recalling the frightful immorality of the times, which in the letter he exposes in all its hideous deformity to those who had once been heathens themselves. Without doubt he chose to emphasise these horrors when confronting Rome, because they were there revealed in the highest ranks; just as the reference to the worship of animals probably owed its point to the welcome given, especially by the capital, to the Egyptian cultus. And his desire to present his thoughts in a form peculiarly adapted to reach and impress the Romans has led him here to draw a strong contrast between their jurisprudence and ethical theories on the one hand, and their practice on the other (i. 32). His words throw a strong light on the higher ranks, not merely on those who held power, but on those who professed culture. He was manifestly well informed as to the true state of matters, and the fable told in later times of his connection with Seneca

reads like a satire, when we think of this criticism by the genuine Paul of history. For the rest, all these marked allusions in the letter to the Romans merely prove how skilfully Paul gauged each case and adapted himself to circumstances, in order to drive home to his heathen audience his appeal to the moral sense. And the above is only one of many representations elicited by the same theme, for his calling was continually giving occasion for them. We find this appeal to the moral sense and judgment, in a much more general form however, in the following section of the same epistle (ii. 14 ff.). The Apostle reminds his readers of conscience, whose sentence accompanies their actions; he reminds them of the judgment that follows conduct, of accusation and justification after the fact; he shows that in this there is a law which, unassisted from without, is written in their hearts, and by means of which they are a law unto themselves. He shows indirectly how this law leads to the thought of a requital. Using the language current among the Romans, and intelligible to them, he divides men into two classes, 'liberal and illiberal;' the former aspire to honour, to something that is imperishable; the latter pursue only their own mean aims; to them the truth is of no value, and they avail themselves of injustice; the noble necessarily attain eternal life, already involved in their aspiration; the ignoble can only reap judgment. It is impossible to understand this argument of the Apostle if we apply to it the standard of his dogmatic theology, according to which he alone is just who receives his righteousness through Jesus. But his preaching could not begin with such a dogma; it was necessary first to prove that there was a law, a retribution within the comprehension of the heathen, if only he interpreted logically his own nature and the voice that spoke in his heart. His certainty of retribution, to which he could not close his eyes, was only the ground of his knowledge that he was without excuse, because, in spite of his truer insight, he was never free from the wrong that he condemned by his own verdict. The Apostle has woven this truth into the chain of an argument with another object, but alike in his

life, in his mission, and in the awakening summons that led to the gospel, it held the first place. Thus he spoke, thus he laid hold of the heathen by his own moral ideas, and by the experience of conscience common to humanity. And the echoes of Roman modes of thought contained in his language (*τοῖς—δόξαν καὶ τιμὴν καὶ ἀφθαρσίαν ζητοῦσιν—τοῖς δὲ ἐξ ἐριθείας*) are only illustrations of his skill in taking advantage of thoughts that already existed, and in giving his teaching a form appropriate to each individual case. His whole purpose was therefore to arouse the moral sense, and, where it existed and was active, to purify and strengthen it, and further, to summon into life the consciousness of sin and guilt. And at the same time all these reflections did not merely conduce to the recognition of the one true God, and the judgment to be expected from Him: they prepared the way for the reception of the tidings that from this God a deliverance had come, and a complete redemption was to be expected; in other words, for the glad tidings of the Son, who, risen from the dead, would come from heaven in order to redeem man from the judgment of God's wrath.

In this way the communication of the Christian mystery followed directly upon the intellectual and moral awakening to monotheism. We can therefore hardly speak of Paul's natural theology as if it were something independent, however clearly we may indicate the separate tenets urged by him in favour of monotheism when he confronted the heathen. For his monotheism is not to be separated from the gospel of the Son of God, and his arguments in support of the former are all the while directed to establish and quicken the desire for a redemption. We can only conjecture how far the monotheistic tendency, which originated in philosophy, had at that period penetrated the popular mind; or how far the people shared in the conviction of the learned, that the world was suffering from a universal corruption in morals, that the actual state of public affairs could only be regarded with despair. But we may confidently affirm that the acceptance of Christianity by the heathen was entirely due to the

fact that its leading ideas of a perfectly pure religion, of a pious view of the world, and of a living conscience, found an echo in the thoughts and feelings of its first Gentile hearers. And if the doctrine of the Gospel concerning Christ could assume to their minds the appearance of a mystery, and could thus wield a charm whose power was so often proved, yet this very propensity to mysteries showed that the presentiment of faith was active in them, that they felt a longing for reconciliation,—in short, that the conditions were present which made them susceptible to Christianity. The impure element, however, in this inclination, especially anything of the nature of fanaticism, or even of an estatic delight in obscure symbols, was left entirely unsatisfied by the preaching of Christ and His Advent, since in it the practical moral import predominated throughout.

The first letter to the Thessalonians gave us the leading lines of the Apostle's earliest discourses on the faith to the heathens. But it is almost more important to us for the insight it gives into the morality which Paul taught at the same time: the demands which were attached to belief in the gospel, and formed the conditions of its acceptance. Here we see very clearly what was expected from and had been adopted by the converts,—the elements of a new Christian morality, in all the simplicity of its first form, but also in the full vigour of a new life. He who believed in God, and accepted the call to enter the kingdom, must also lead a life worthy of his choice, 1 Thess. ii. 13 (2 Thess. i. 11). His object was now to please the living God (1 Thess. iv. 1). To this it was soon added that Christianity was to be recommended to outsiders by a becoming behaviour (iv. 12). So the Apostle, even in his earliest teaching, 'gives charges through the Lord Jesus' (iv. 2), that is, with an appeal to His authority, since they were His commands. And these commands contained the Divine will, whose whole object, however, was their sanctification. This included, above all, the renunciation of certain reprehensible usages of their former life and associates. They were to abandon unchastity (iv. 3), with which is contrasted a nobler conception and

observance of marriage, and (ver. 6) dishonesty in commercial and social intercourse,—a sin which, so far from being regarded lightly, was to form a subject of God's judgment. Further, the Apostle (ver. 9) declared it to be a matter of course that the new believers should be bound more closely together by love, by brotherly fellowship. This was God's own teaching. It sprang from the identity of their faith, and also the identity of the fortunes which from now were to form their experience. But this morality plainly owed its wholly original impress to the demand to prepare for the day of the Lord (iv. 13 ff., v. 1 ff.). Nothing could spur men so strongly to self-examination, to continual watchfulness and self-discipline, as the conviction of the urgent necessity of being ready for this all-important decision. Their thoughts on this matter divided the Christians from all the rest of the world. Their knowledge seemed to them the clear daylight, while all other men lived on in the darkness and confusion of the blind. They not only waited however for the day, but—and here expectancy was reconciled with present faith—the day for them had already dawned, and they belonged to it; so long as their faith flourished and retained its vitality, they could not but watch and fight against all error and temptation. For the rest, if Paul's use of the figure of watchfulness shows that for this passage he found his model in the sayings of Jesus, we may learn from the use of the analogy of the race-course (1 Cor. ix. 24; Phil. iii. 12 ff.), how when among Greeks and Romans he adapted his words, as a rule, to their habits of life.

Now this straining of the whole forces of the soul, and the overpowering conviction of so great and glorious a possession, were inevitably attended by a danger, the danger, namely, of excitement and self-glorification. The mere excitement might cause a believer to feel himself no longer at home within the limitations of common life, to imagine that all it offered him was insufficient, to think that every moment should be entirely devoted to the sacred cause, and, wherever possible, to public exertions on its behalf. Therefore the task which we now see the Apostle performing was especially urgent in this early period. He sought to prune away this ex-



crecence, and ranked with his fundamental warnings and counsels the necessity of seeing that their honour was involved in living quietly, in each attending to his own business, and working with his own hands (1 Thess. iv. 11 f.). And his influence owed its greatest power to the conspicuous example he gave, while preaching the gospel, of a painstaking and industrious life (ii. 9). But this exhortation has a still deeper significance. It proves unequivocally, that from the beginning, and in his mission itself, the Apostle had made it perfectly clear that Christianity was to make no change in the rank, or calling, or external relations of its adherents, a principle afterwards expounded again in reference to the Corinthian Church.

For the exhortation addressed to the individual to stick to his business necessarily involved his remaining in his own class. And the position of the warning is emphatic; it stands side by side with the words which recall the fraternal relationship of Christians. From this follows inevitably the moral levelling of social distinctions. Christianity therefore met the oppressed lower classes with the consolation that it revealed a world that had been to all intents hidden, a world in which they were to be considered the equals of any man, and that it also disclosed to them the prospect of help in their times of want. But it did not awaken any expectation of a revolution in the social order; on the contrary, it unequivocally rejected it. And even in the Church equality was not to be realised in other than a moral sense. It is in the Church itself that in a short time submission to the distinctions resulting from Church life was demanded, and was defended by the Apostle under the same figure of the bodily members as had already been used in famous classical instances to justify the difference of ranks.

## CHAPTER II

### THE THEOLOGY OF PAUL

#### § 1. *Introduction.*

THE same Apostle who delivered early Christianity from the limitations of the Jewish race and religion has perhaps in another respect contributed most to its retention of the Jewish spirit. His theology retains its whole method. This we are entitled to call the earliest Christian theology. In Paul's case it was a necessity; it supplied to some extent the want of personal acquaintance with Jesus; this want of an immediate knowledge for the basis of his creed impelled him to justify his position by means of reason. At the same time he found it necessary to refute his Judaistic opponents on their own ground, and to defend the renunciation of the law with the resources of Jewish theology. The latter part of his work was soonest forgotten, and it was left to later times to rediscover the gold of imperishable truth in his teaching as to the legal method in general, under the husk of his rabbinic discussion of Jewish legalism. But it was different with the former portion of his system. The theology of the Apostle concerning Christ and His death became a starting-point for the doctrine of the early Church, and thence passed over into Gentile Christianity; it first satisfied in the heathen world as it became Christian the craving for mystery and philosophy, and thus contributed to the success of the great mission to the Gentiles.

Christianity as a religion without theology is inconceivable. In the first place, for the very reason that called Pauline theology

into existence. It could not be separated from the religion of its founder, and it therefore demanded a knowledge of history. But as monotheism and faith in a universal aim, it was also of itself the religion of the reason with the indestructible impulse of thought. The first Gentile Christians gained with their faith the proud consciousness of a gnosis. The Apostle Paul therefore fulfilled quite as great a mission by his innovating work as a thinker as by the action that delivered Christianity from the trammels of the national religion. The one depended on the other.

§ 2. *The Theology of the Primitive Church.*

The primitive Church was indeed not without a theology. The view is very inaccurate that represents the early Apostles to have possessed merely an intuitive faith, to have propounded nothing but sacred commands, and to have consisted merely of men who, belonging to the lower classes and humbler trades, were altogether incapable of scholarship. Even the transmission of the Master's words demanded some knowledge. The mission to the Jews is however wholly inconceivable apart from the practice of proving the new faith from Holy Scriptures, and this practice is one that would produce a scholarly habit. Trade and scholarship were not regarded as incompatible by the Jews of that period. Those Apostles who took distant journeys, and especially Peter (1 Cor. ix. 5), could not possibly have fulfilled their calling without being suitably equipped. Of course we must suppose the scholarly part of their work to have been almost exclusively confined to Scriptural proof. It was supplemented by another form of spiritual activity proper to the prophetic impulse, that of presaging and seeing visions, expressing itself in figurative language, in close imitation of the preaching of Jesus Himself. We may look on the words of Jesus preserved in Matt. xiii. 11 ff., 52, as conclusive for this view of the state of matters. On the one hand: 'To you it is given to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven—to him who hath shall be given, yea, given in superabundant measure;' on the

other: 'Every scribe who hath been made a disciple to the kingdom of God is like a householder, who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old.'

### § 3. *The Kingdom of Heaven.*

The relation in which even the primitive Church stood to the law was not so simple as not to require justification in the form, which it would necessarily assume, of a doctrine of the law. Paul said to Peter, according to Gal. ii. 16, 'because we knew that man is not justified by the works of the law, but only by faith in Christ Jesus,' and in this he did not merely utter his own opinion, but plainly a principle which, though reported in his own language, had been formerly agreed to by both Apostles. The extent to which the minds of the early Apostles had been occupied by this question is shown most clearly, however, by the emphasis with which, in Matt. v. 17 ff., the words enjoining the preservation of the law are stated: 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I came not to destroy, but to fulfil—whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven.' But the upholding of the law was called for not merely by false accusations, but by their own consciousness, the seat of conflict between liberty and bondage. The primitive Apostles could repeat the assurance given by Jesus. Not only was it far from their thoughts to come into collision with the civil authority, but the law was and remained for them the sacred record of the Divine will. The practice of rectifying its precepts, which they followed in imitation of Jesus, did not revoke their principle; the practice could be grounded upon the sacred writings themselves, and their method is significantly indicated by the manner in which Christ's solemn assurance combined the law and the prophets. The rectification was found in prophecy. There can be no doubt then that they believed in a forgiveness of sin, imparted by the word and afterwards effected by the death of Jesus, and thus we

have the doctrine that forgiveness is to be obtained through faith in Him. Therefore fidelity in observing the law regarded as a means of salvation certainly required to be supplemented by this faith. In this we have the conviction which Paul assures us was that of Peter. But it also establishes the whole power exerted by the proclamation of the kingdom. Jesus had spoken of the kingdom both as present and future without any distinction of terms. The expectation of it, an assured hope, was a mighty spiritual force in the life of the Christian. But he had also learned from Jesus to think of the future kingdom of the Messiah as wholly a kingdom of heaven, or of God, as the kingdom of Divine righteousness belonging to a new, a spiritual order. Hence it had become possible for him to recognise this kingdom, with no change of designation, as present and invisible, as existing wholly in the work and witness of the Divine Spirit. And thus were disclosed at once an infinite world of faith and a wide field for prophetic interpretation. That was the great mystery; and, side by side with the certainty of the actual possession of the kingdom, it originated the study and unravelling of the signs both of the present world and of the future hope. This prophetic work is closely connected with the parables of Jesus.

#### § 4. *Christ.*

Like the new righteousness and the kingdom of heaven, it was above all necessary that the Christ Himself, the belief that Jesus, their Master, was really the Messiah, should be proved from Holy Scripture. In order to satisfy Jewish modes of thought, the first task was to establish certain details, the circumstances of His life and the features of His conduct and work; the Synoptic Gospels, especially the first, give us a quite sufficient view of this theology or procedure. In carrying out this task it was not at all necessary that all the texts adopted should have been already employed by the Jews in their Messianic theology, it was enough that in their present application they should produce an overpowering



effect. But we can see with certainty the main features of their thought and teaching concerning the Person of Christ. The characteristic foundation of the theology was laid by the title assumed by Jesus,—the Son of Man. That Jesus made use of this title is indisputably vouched for by the Gospels; the recollection of the fact persisted at a time when the witnesses to it did no longer and could no longer employ the phrase themselves. Jesus for His part had adopted, not indeed a prevalent title of the Messiah, but still one that had been given. The context reminds us, in such an instance as Matt. xxvi. 64, of the prophecy, Daniel vii. 13; in other cases it suggests the use of the phrase in Ezekiel ii. 1 ff. From the whole tenor of Jesus' history we gather that He did not at first present Himself to His countrymen as the Messiah, but rather led them of their own accord to regard Him in that light. And while the form given by Matthew's Gospel (xvi. 13), to his question as to the view taken by the people, 'Who do men say that the Son of Man is?' is certainly not the original one, yet it expresses quite appropriately the thought, that the name which He had chosen for Himself contained not so much a solution as a problem. Now, as is shown also by the answer as to the popular verdict, the name itself formed for His followers the foundation of the view, that Jesus, as the Messiah, was a man, and of human origin. Nor did His criticism of the name Son of David (Matt. xxii. 34 ff.) imply that He denied this descent, but merely that He rejected the conclusion drawn from it, the use of it to define His vocation. But even the designation Son of God does not take us beyond the conception that He was man. The confession elicited from Peter by Jesus' question did not in the earliest tradition go further than that He was the Messiah, the Christ; in Matthew's Gospel it is expanded by the addition of the words: 'the Son of the living God' (so also Matt. xxvi. 63; Mark xiv. 61). But this very phrase still conveys the thought that the title Son of God simply means the messenger chosen by God. And once more, the words of Matt. xi. 27, Luke x. 22, do not mean more than: He who receives revelations from the Father in heaven. But, besides all this, there

is one saying retained in the Synoptic Gospels which absolutely precludes the opinion that the early Apostles regarded Christ as a Divine being in any sense whatever, and that is the declaration that blasphemy against the Son may be forgiven, while blasphemy against the Holy Spirit can not (Matt. xii. 32; Luke xii. 10). In entire agreement with this His most marvellous deeds were done through this Divine Spirit. This not only excludes the later view of Jesus' conception by the power of the Holy Ghost, but we are at a stage when the narrative of the descent of the Spirit upon Him at His baptism was still unknown. That the latter narrative did not belong to the earlier time is shown further by the episode of John the Baptist's message (Matt. xi. 2; Luke vii. 19). Moreover, the mystery involved, according to Jesus' own statement, in His intercourse with the Father, did not point to more than the belief in the marvellous revelation through the agency of the Spirit. This belief took another shape only after the resurrection. From that moment Jesus was in heaven, and the thought exerted a reflex influence on the life now past. The new conception then became mirrored in such narratives of His earthly life as the history of the transfiguration, where, even during His ministry, He appeared, for the moment at least, in the form of a heavenly being. The connection is plainly expressed in Matt. xvii. 9. A point was now sought for in His earthly life which should prepare the way for the new conception. But this only proved satisfactory for a little; and the narrative of the baptism, which established the nature of Jesus throughout the course of His ministry, took its rise among Christians of a later time, who, with the recovery of a complete history of the Master, also felt the need of giving by such an expedient unity to the views they held concerning Him. Still more remote from the actual course of events lies the adoption of the miraculous account of His birth, and this compelled them to correct His genealogy. The Jewish Church of the earlier time regarded Him as the son of Joseph, and, through Joseph, the descendant of David. And how long this view lasted is shown by the rise of the genealogies which, according to the

heading, Matt. i. 1, did not form inherent portions of the older evangelic manifesto, but were independent compositions, called into existence by the controversy with the Jews, and evidently bearing in their reflections the impress of a time already remote. There is no trace in the early Jewish Christianity of a theology in which Jesus was held to have pre-existed as a heavenly man or Divine being. We must certainly regard the change of conception after the resurrection as a source of new thoughts and spiritual inquiry, and we can thus understand how Paul's doctrine of the nature of Christ was not afterwards, so far as we know, attacked or disputed. The 'other Jesus,' of whom Paul speaks in 2 Cor. xi. 4 was not another in His personality, but in His teaching (cf. Gal. i. 6). And we have just as little ground for supposing that the various parties in the primitive Church entertained different views regarding Jesus.

### § 5. *The Death of Christ.*

During the life of Jesus His followers found the evidence of His Messianic character quite as much in His teaching as in His signs. The former proved that He bore a peculiarly Divine authority, and the latter showed that He wielded a power stronger than all the forces arrayed against God. He could compel the demons, and His superiority in this sphere removed all the scruples suggested by His humble position, and by the absence of royal power or evidence of triumph. And since He combined with His teaching the declaration of the forgiveness of sins, and the assurance that their prayer was heard, every one who believed in Him obtained all that was necessary to convince him that he had already actually entered the kingdom of heaven. If the conviction was shaken for the moment by the execution of Jesus, yet it had rapidly recovered from the shock, and only been raised to a higher plane by faith in His resurrection. The death of Jesus was by that event set in a light that robbed it of its horror; it was the transition to, the condition of, the higher certainty; and

to this conclusion pointed all those sayings of Jesus which declared that it was the path He must tread. In this sense was that last word of His to be understood, in which He had declared that His death sealed a new covenant with His blood; and from this view of His death arose the saying which, in any case, does not belong to the earliest collection of his words: that 'He was come to give His life a ransom for many' (Matt. xx. 28). But with all this we have not yet by any means reached the point that Jesus' death had, as such, become the real cause of the reconciliation and redemption of sinful men. Undoubtedly a special justification was required of the exact form in which His death occurred. For although one phase of the expectations of the Jews anticipated that the Messiah would have sufferings to undergo, yet the thought of such an event as the crucifixion was absolutely foreign to their minds. And we have sufficient proof of this in the fact that the Jews, not only in the time of the Apostles, but even in the second century, advanced the death on the cross as the absolute refutation of Jesus' claims. Still, God had ordained this death, and it was a necessary consequence that a higher and peculiar object was involved in it, to be attained by this means, and by this means alone. Now, so far as we may gather from the traces left by the primitive Church in their tradition of Jesus' words and their treatment of them, the early Christians found this object above all in the complete breach, caused by the crime of the Jews and the reproach of the cross, between the disciples of the kingdom and its enemies, and in the antagonism thus revealed between the kingdom and the present world. In this sense the rejection of the Messiah belonged to the conditions of the coming of the kingdom, and Jesus' disciples became certain that in the world, as it existed, their calling, like that of their Master, necessarily centred in the cross (Matt. x. 38, xvi. 24). But this must soon have been followed by another reflection, for Paul relates (1 Cor. xv. 3) how he had proclaimed the truth 'that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures,' and he tells us that 'this truth he had received.' The inference is indisputable: the primitive Church

already taught, and proved from Scripture, that the death of Jesus exerted a saving influence in the forgiveness of sin. This is the extent of our information, apart from what may be inferred from the institution of the Lord's Supper.

If after all this we may speak of a theology of the primitive Church, we are clearly justified in doing so, in so far as certain principles were taught, both with regard to the binding force of the law, and with regard to the nature of the kingdom and Jesus' Messianic character, and since, further, these principles were taught theologically, *i.e.* were proved by interpreting the sacred writings. But there did not yet exist a Christian theology in the stricter sense of the term, for the categories applied to the contents of the faith still belonged essentially to Jewish thought. The relation to the old religion was quite the same in the world of thought as in the world of fact. The new wine was contained in the old bottles.

### § 6. *The Sources of Paul's Doctrine.*

#### THE PROOF FROM SCRIPTURE.

For our estimate of this theology of the early Apostles and primitive Church we are entirely dependent on second-hand sources, and much is therefore merely conjectural. With Paul the case is quite different. Of course, none of his letters, not even that to the Romans, is a formal treatise; nowhere do they belie their occasional character; yet they contain express statements of doctrine, and throughout give us a sufficient insight into his thoughts, as well as into his habitual procedure. Certain sections may be accepted as direct specimens of his speeches.

In Paul's practice, as in that of his predecessors, the proof from Holy Scripture takes the first place. The importance attached to this is strikingly shown by its prominence in his statement of the fundamental facts of the Gospel. The first point is not that Jesus died and rose again, but that this happened according to Holy Scripture (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4). The gospel is the Divine message,



because God by His prophets had proclaimed it beforehand in the sacred writings (Rom. i. 2). In the proof-texts it is therefore not only the writing which speaks (Rom. iv. 3, ix. 17, x. 11, xi. 2); Scripture appears (Gal. iii. 8, 22), as the Being who has foreseen everything and by His utterances determined the course of events; in short, the written word is equivalent to Providence, so certainly is it the declaration of the Divine will.

Paul's treatment of Scriptural proof, however, falls under various and graduated headings. The use of a single expression for a definite proposition requires no illustration. A second stage of his practice, however, consists in the collection of a number of texts, drawn from very different books, to support one principle; we have a striking example of this in the series of quotations, Rom. iii. 10-18, meant to prove the universality of sin, and indeed, as is stated, its universality among the Jews. A third stage exemplifies a much more advanced procedure. The reflection is here forced upon us that Paul had collected these verses in their logical sequence to support certain more extended doctrines; that they served the purpose of a scheme for the development of his ideas; and that in the order he has assigned them they form an outline of the train of thought. If we compare the quotations in Rom. i. 17, iii. 10 ff., iv. 3, 7 ff., 17, 18, 25, with those in Gal. iii. 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 16, we see that we have here a combination which, apart from a certain liberty of selection in the less important points, is identical in both cases, and was intended to prove the righteousness of faith as divinely ordained, the impossibility of a righteousness through the law, and the deliverance from the law by the death of Christ. Take the verses out of their context, *i.e.* from the argument, and it will be found that by themselves they furnish thesis, antithesis, and solution—in other words, the outline of the Apostle's doctrine on the subject. The connection is interrupted in the letter to the Romans by episodic arguments, but the resumption of the proof is still clearly marked. Now, we cannot doubt that this Scriptural proof was not arranged for the first time during the composition of the letters. The Apostle had

prepared it for general purposes, and only brought it forward in his epistles as occasion required. It is evident therefore that he had composed a kind of doctrinal system in this form for didactic purposes. Another example is contained in the argument in Rom. ix.-xi. From ix. 1 to xi. 10 (cf. besides xi. 26 ff.) the whole passage reads like a mosaic of texts connected by short explanations; the texts being chosen to prove the freedom of God in electing and rejecting men, the ground of Jewish unbelief and Gentile faith, and the ultimate hope for Israel. Here also Paul has evidently employed a piece of his Biblical theology which, no doubt, he had often enough occasion to apply. But the compilation was certainly not made expressly for the present letter.

Of the exposition of the passages quoted it may be said, in general, that it is dominated by the intention of finding proof for a definite thought, and therefore the goal is frequently reached by taking advantage of mere similarity, or by expanding, deepening, or generalising the sense. Still, in doing so the Apostle at any rate observes a certain degree of moderation. But he was at home in, and made use of, all the artifices of rabbinic exposition. It was for him an axiom that certain precepts of the law were only to be understood figuratively and to be applied freely. In 1 Cor. ix. 8-10, *e.g.*, he says, 'For why should God care for the oxen? and besides, it is absolutely certain that it was all written for our sakes.' In the same way the history of Hagar could only be conceived as allegorical, and required to be interpreted (Gal. iv. 21 ff.). The principle that everything in Scripture was written for us led him also to the opinion that the historical events related in it are essentially types and examples for us (1 Cor. x. 6, 11), and this gave him the standpoint from which to regard them. Accordingly the rock which refreshed the Jews in the wilderness, and which they afterwards rejected, was simply Christ Himself. Nor did the Apostle shrink from assigning different meanings, and that in closely connected passages, to one and the same word or object, as, *e.g.* to the veil on Moses' face (2 Cor. iii. 7, 13). Further, in Gal. iii. 16 we have a striking example of his practice of deriving

far-reaching conclusions from a verbal form; the Messianic interpretation of the seed of Abraham is deduced from the singular *σπέρμα*, although in another passage the same word is taken and applied in its general sense (Rom. iv. 18). And, apart from this, instances occur in which general principles are supported by wide deductions from the Biblical narrative, *e.g.* 1 Cor. xi. 8, where the creation of Eve is referred to.

But in the strictly doctrinal portions of the Pauline letters, in the discussions of dogmas, Scriptural proof often forms the foundation, then an examination of the subject-matter is added which solves the difficulties and completes the structure. The letter to the Galatians furnishes us with the clearest instances of this practice. In iii. 6 ff. Scriptural proof is first led to show that righteousness is of faith and not of the law, and that Christ has delivered us from the latter. Then the proposition is illustrated and confirmed by the analogy of a will, and only after this we have an independent discussion, in which the question is stated and answered as to the significance still attaching in this respect to the law. The whole dogmatic treatment of the subject is therefore postponed until the Scriptural proof is given. The same sequence however is to be observed also in the first main division of the Roman letter, although at first sight it would seem as if the texts for justification by faith in chap. iv. are made to follow conclusions already based on reason and on facts. But in reality the Scriptural proof, though interrupted by various reflections due to the purpose of the letter, extends from i. 17 to the close of chap. iv.; and it is then followed, not merely by the practical application, but also, chap. v., by the higher teaching that treats of the plan, proved to be Divine, as to the way of salvation. In the third section of the Roman letter, again, the Apostle follows the same course. He first concludes the Scriptural proof of the nature of Divine election contained in chap. ix. f., and only then begins his higher interpretation of this actual order of events, ascending as he does so into the loftiest sphere of prophecy. We may therefore assume it as an axiom that Paul regarded the proof

from Holy Scripture as fundamental for the vindication of his doctrine.

This is not affected by the fact that, as in 1 Cor. ix. 7 ff., xi. 1 ff., he at the same time argues from reason, nature, and the customs and views of men, or that he also goes for evidence to sayings of our Lord. The former merely served to support his conclusions. The proof taken from our Lord's words, however, could only be applied, with hardly an exception, to moral conduct, seldom to questions of creed. Jesus had left no system of religion; this earliest Christian theology, while it adhered to the sacred writings, was independent. But it must be admitted that the Scriptures were employed in a sense and to support principles already adopted as certain. And however emphatically the Apostle sets this proof in the foreground, his doctrine was not derived from it, but is to be traced to another source.

### § 7. *The Spirit.*

It is absolutely certain that, in selecting proof from Scripture for his doctrines, Paul was actually, though unconsciously, guided by certain definite presuppositions. But he has also given an explicit statement of the quarter from which he obtained the foundations of his doctrinal system. It was not the doctrine of the primitive Church, nor was it the teaching of Jesus to which the Church gave currency. And no other source is left but his own thought and spiritual life; or, as he himself expresses it, he obtained it from the Spirit of God which he had received. This is self-evident from the emphatic and exclusive reference of his faith in Christ to a personal revelation of God. The all-important knowledge of this faith he ascribes in his own case, and in that of believers converted by him, to a creative work in their hearts. He says (2 Cor. iv. 6), 'It is God who said, Light shall shine out of darkness, who shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.' On the certainty that he possessed the Spirit of God he rested his claim to pass judgment, even in everyday matters and on moral conduct, and to

expect that his decision should have the weight of a commandment in the Church (1 Cor. vii. 40). With regard to his dogmatic teaching a perfectly definite statement of his position occurs in 1 Cor. ii. 10-16. He here claims for the spiritual man, that is, 'the man who possesses the Spirit of God,' an intuitive certainty as to the highest truth, and an exclusive right of deciding in divine things, and he applies these attributes to himself, to the doctrine which he imparts as an Apostle. Knowledge of the faith is due to the Spirit; not merely because man, as man, receives in the divine part of his nature the power of knowing the supernatural, nor because he is provided to some extent with rational ideas; but the Spirit imparted to the believer is the absolute organ of knowledge, and especially of the knowledge of God, because he is in communication with the Divine Consciousness itself. The man who has this spirit thinks with the thoughts of God, and what is in God is as open to him as to the mind of God. The same thought is repeated in the words: 'we have the mind of Christ.' Connected with this is the distinction made by Paul on another occasion between what the believer does and what the Spirit of God does in him (Rom. viii. 26). Man is enabled by his conviction to hope and wait patiently for the future promised to him. But meanwhile the Spirit of God prays in him, and though the prayer may be unintelligible to himself yet it reaches and is accepted as his by God. Accordingly two things are possible. One is that the Divine Spirit acts in man, while he may neither understand nor control what is done. The other implies that man acquiesces wholly in the act, and the human consciousness becomes itself divine. In any case the Apostle meant that the highest knowledge, imparted by him in his teaching, was in his conviction communicated to him directly by God, and was therefore on the same plane with the work of revelation to which he owed the beginning of his faith. But the truths of that loftiest knowledge of which he speaks, referred, so far as we see, to the Divine plan of the world and of salvation; what he taught about the latter was derived from them.



§ 8. *Paul's Dialectic.*

Paul felt therefore that the final and supreme principles of his theology rested on, and presented themselves to him as, intuitions. When he reached the point at which all problems were solved and all antitheses reconciled, the final form of the truth appeared before him with a splendour that wholly mastered him; what he now perceived he had not discovered; it had been given to him, and he concluded with a doxology, of which we have so characteristic an example in the peroration in Rom. xi. 33-36. But in all such cases, the course of thought that led up to his conclusion reveals an often surprising likeness, and, in fact, conformity to a system. The Apostle reached his final intuition by a method that may be described at once as dialectical. Everywhere we find certain antitheses which are stated by him in all their sharpness of outline: these he seeks to solve, or rather he applies to them the great solution which he had discovered once for all. It was the great antithesis through which he made his own way to his faith that was constantly reflected in it in argument after argument, determining his whole treatment of human history, of the life of the soul, and of the Divine revelation.

Paul had a strong inclination to produce his effects by unexpected parallels. Thus in Rom. i. 32 he introduces the contrast between Roman law and the theatre, simply in order to show in the parallel instance what importance need be attached to the acquaintance of the Jews with their law. Conversely in 1 Thess. ii. 14 we have the hostility of the Jews against the Christians in their midst as a parallel for the heathen persecution of the Gentile-Christian Church. In such cases one fact is illustrated by a similar instance, which proves how the like cause always produces the like results. Under this head we have also the description of heathendom in Rom. i. For the unnatural vices are here set in the front of the description of immorality, merely in order to show how the spiritual perversity implied in idolatry causes a similar perversion in the sphere of conduct. The numerous parallels of a like

nature drawn by Paul everywhere reveal his endeavour to abstract a certain law from the course of events. He believed therefore that such a law actually existed. That similar causes produce similar phenomena, that, *e.g.*, a sin is punished by an involuntary act of the same type, does not however exhaust this law. Paul was rather convinced of this, that humanity has a history in which everything falls into great homogeneous sections, and that these sections themselves, in their necessary sequence, run by a uniform law into similarity and dissimilarity. This view is most comprehensively expounded in the two passages, Rom. v. 12-21, 1 Cor. xv. 45 ff. The starting-point in both is the parallel between Adam and Christ. The results of their intervention form the great antithesis in the history of man, and yet the one section is similar to the other in its conformity to law, and in the same way they are both governed by the law which has determined the precedence of the one, in order that the other may be possible. This thought influenced Paul so strongly as to determine his most important judgments upon the subject in hand. It inspired his final decision on the question of the nature and significance of the law, as in his explanation of sin, and his estimate of our present earthly life (2 Cor. iv. 16 ff., Rom. viii. 18 ff.). But the loftiest reflections of the Apostle led him to see in the solution of the antithesis the final aim of the Divine rule; and to prove in consequence that the antithesis itself had been decreed by God (Rom. v. 20, 21, viii. 35 ff., xi. 32, 1 Cor. xv. 53 ff., Gal. iii. 22 ff.). In view of all this we might say that the Apostle arrived at his theories of life in the natural way, that he observed and followed the history of his subject-matter itself. But a closer examination of his doctrines shows that in certain cases his view was shaped by the law of thought under which he worked. But, in any case, we see how far we are justified in speaking in Paul's case of a theology. His fundamental principles had been furnished and stamped with the certainty of intuitions by his faith and the manner of his conversion. These he wrought into consistent systems of doctrine by the help of his formal presuppositions, and these systems, in turn,

guided him in arranging the material from Holy Scripture, which served him for proof.

### § 9. *His Polemic.*

The Apostle's method in his occasional controversies was often very summary; it was enough for him that he was able to indicate any sort of error, or misconception, on the part of his opponent. For example, he brushed aside a reproach levelled at him by Jewish thinkers, simply by saying that they attributed to him the rejection of a dogma accepted by both parties; he did not enter into the question how the opinions attacked by them were to be reconciled with the dogma. Speaking generally, he often sought in his arguments with his opponents not so much to convince them by indisputable reasons, as to overpower and crush them by the force of his own conviction. For the rest, to illustrate the question and strengthen his position, he introduced all sorts of analogies from nature and human life, sometimes employing the arts of rabbinic subtlety, sometimes indulging in allusions to thoughts current among the Greeks and Romans; indeed, he conducted his case occasionally like an advocate in a court of law. Thoroughly characteristic of the former method of refuting an opponent is the instance in Rom. iii. 6. The Jews had charged him with the consequence drawn by them from his teaching that God would be unjust if He inflicted punishment. His whole answer is that that is altogether impossible, since God is Judge of the whole world. He is content therefore with assuring them that no one need ascribe such nonsense to him. The other form of objection to his teaching, namely, that it encouraged sin, he refutes quite in the same way, with the answer that whoever ventured to hold such a thought at once pronounced his own condemnation (ver. 8). But at this point he considers it further necessary to avert the possible imputation of a trick, and in doing so he borrows the language of the courts (*προεχόμεθα*, of urging or interposing a claim or title). He is entitled to speak as he has done since his allegation that he

did not regard them as righteous was not a new incident in the dispute. He had already made it the subject of a public accusation, and he now supports it with his crushing Scriptural proof. His skill in employing analogies from nature is perhaps most brilliantly exemplified in his proof for the resurrection body (1 Cor. xv. 35 ff.). Human affairs are drawn upon in the analogies of a testamentary disposition, of the power of education, of the rights of minor and major (Gal. iii. 15 ff.). And the facts of the spiritual life furnish the description of the inner conflict in the sphere of morals (Rom. vii.). But above all, the power of his eloquence is established by the splendid unity of his thought. There is nothing fragmentary, or casual, or non-essential. Everything down to the least detail is dominated from the one central point. For him the whole was God's work; it had all one and the same object. Thus were the heathen also brought face to face with the faith in the one God in all its overpowering force, not only because it was a necessity of thought, and explained the unity of creation, but because with the Divine unity there was also given the unity of the idea of the world in its goal—man's salvation and the kingdom of God (1 Cor. xv. 28, Rom. xi. 36, 1 Cor. viii. 6). It is this unity of aim and end which binds the whole of Paul's doctrine together, and is mirrored in all its parts, while it reveals everywhere an interaction dominated from above. Reflection, whether on the results of experience or perception, ever produces elevating and fruitful thoughts, because everything is connected with and co-operates towards this end (cf. the instances, 2 Cor. i. 5-7, viii. 14 f., and elsewhere).

### § 10. *The Doctrine of Christ.*

#### THE HISTORICAL CHRIST.

Paul has not given a complete outline of his doctrine in the writings in our possession; we have every reason to believe that he never did so. What we have are separate points of doctrine,

elaborated according to occasion and aim. The aim also explains why the presentation of his matter is by no means always precisely identical. When we seek from these fragments to construct the whole, we can start just as well from his doctrine of Christ as from that of the means of salvation, or, to go a step further back, from that of sin. His faith in Christ was from his conversion the first thing, and everything else depended upon it; but, on the other hand, even in his conversion itself, this faith was most intimately connected both as cause and effect with his thoughts concerning sin and the law. We can therefore give the first place either to the one or to the other of these points of doctrine. But on the other hand, it is simply one-sided to start from the Epistle to the Romans, and take the nature and means of righteousness as the foundation of the whole doctrine of salvation. For the notion of righteousness did not by any means exhaust for Paul that of man's salvation. He gave it a prominent place only in the conflict with Jewish doctrine, and in reference to his own past. When dealing exclusively with the ideas he now held, the central point of salvation was his notion of the Divine Sonship. If we keep this before us, his doctrine is seen to approximate to that of the early Apostles or of Jesus Himself much more closely than is apparent from the other conception of it. On the other hand, we at once perceive that the category of the kingdom of God, which occupies so large a place in that earlier teaching, almost disappears in Paul. It only appears incidentally as a reminiscence of the traditional doctrine of the Church. It is quite as distinctive that he has not retained the notion of the Son of Man to designate Jesus. The Son of Man belonged for him to the past, and the kingdom of God is, as it were, merged in the doctrine of the Christ Himself.

Paul was undoubtedly acquainted with the evangelic tradition of Jesus; of the acts done by Jesus during His lifetime, however, he makes no use in his teaching; we find no proof drawn from His miracles or His philanthropy. His quotations show that he knew the sayings of the Master. He employs them to decide finally in



practical questions, and also in questions of creed. But yet he applies them seldom, and there is nowhere a trace of his having done so in order to prove what Jesus Himself was. The explanation of this is, that the Christ whom he had come to know was He who had risen, and that this idea overruled his whole thought regarding Him. Consistently with this, the name of Lord, *Kύριος*, no longer signified to him merely the head of Christian doctrine and fellowship, but it had acquired the notion of the Divine power and sovereignty, which belonged to Jesus strictly in His present rank as living in the presence of God. It forms no valid objection to this that he says, 1 Cor. i. 23, his whole preaching was exclusively occupied with Christ crucified. For the death of Christ was itself for him the transition to that which He had become as the Risen One; it was, in fact, the laying aside of the earthly life. He has expressly declared (2 Cor. v. 16) that not only had the life of those for whom Christ died become entirely a new thing, but that Christ Himself was no longer the same. What He was formerly according to the flesh, and therefore in His human life on earth, no longer exists for us. Nor is this proposition wholly explained by the view that it meant the rejection of claims made by the Jewish Christians, who founded on their acquaintance with the historical Christ. Paul was rather expressing his judgment on the value of the earthly life of Jesus, the Christ, in contrast with His present rank. The doctrine is more fully explained in Rom. i. 4. In this passage the Christ is by His nature the Son of God, and as such has been promised beforehand by the prophets, but after appearing as David's descendant according to the flesh, He is now first ranked as the Son of God. And the meaning of these words is proved by the supplementary statements: 'it took place by the resurrection from the dead: it was accomplished in another sphere than that of the flesh, namely, in that of the Spirit of Holiness, and therefore He was invested with power.' Accordingly, what He was to be as the pre-announced Son of God was only inaugurated in conformity with prophecy in His earthly life, but was for

the first time realised at and after His resurrection, and then also His earthly life had fulfilled its object, and its importance was past. Essentially the same thing is repeated in Phil. ii. 9, where the Apostle says that, after the death of Jesus, God by exalting Him conferred upon Him the name and power of the Lord; in Rom. viii. 1 f., that after sin had been condemned by His death, the power of the Spirit, a new law of life, was born into activity through Him; and in 1 Cor. xv. 45 f., that the last Adam, *i.e.* Jesus Christ, became a lifegiving Spirit, thus beginning a new order in the human race. For, although the 'last Adam' had been from the beginning, in other words, had been created a lifegiving Spirit, yet He was not merely the last in order in the earthly history of man, but His essential nature, hitherto latent, only became active from and after His resurrection. The Apostle's leading conception of Jesus as the *Kύριος* in His present rank only influences his representation of the antecedent earthly life, by making it appear inadequate to His nature, something foreign to Him and voluntarily assumed. And in this we have indeed the greatest change of view as compared with that of the primitive Apostles. Paul was certainly far from ascribing to Jesus merely an apparent humanity. He held unequivocally that He was a natural descendant of David (Rom. i. 3), and, like other men, born of a woman (Gal. iv. 4). And yet His humanity was to the Apostle only a figure, *ὁμοίωμα*, of the flesh of sin which was common to all (Rom. viii. 3), or, for it is the same thing, He had come only in the figure of a man (Phil. ii. 7). For Paul there is nothing inconsistent in this. In the first place, the notion of the 'figure' is related to the thought that the humanity in which He appeared was not that of sinful flesh, for He knew no sin (2 Cor. v. 21). But, in the second place, it is implied that the humanity of Jesus did not correspond to His true nature, and so far was something borrowed, a secondary formation. And as a corollary we have then the thought that the object of this human life was the condemnation of the present condition of man, the annihilation of flesh, sin, and law, and therefore that it was accomplished through

the crucifixion. Thus we see why, while for the doctrine of the Apostle the fact that the Lord appeared as man, the fact of His life, was itself of the greatest importance, on the other hand the actions done by Him during His life have receded into the background.

### § 11. *The Nature of Christ.*

The Christ, with whom alone Paul is now concerned, is by no means, therefore, merely the exalted man; He is called the Son of God and the Lord, not merely to denote that a dignity had been conferred upon the man Jesus; the title rather distinguishes Him as a heavenly being. Paul has not called Him God. Rather, He is placed under God, precisely as a human being is ranked beneath Him (1 Cor. xi. 3). The Divine glory, which He possesses, has been conferred upon Him by God (2 Cor. iv. 4 ff.); and the sovereignty which he has received from God, and wields for Him, will end with its restitution (1 Cor. xv. 28). While the heathen have many gods and lords, *i.e.* administrators and rulers of the world, the Christian faith knows only one God, Creator of all things, to whom our destiny is leading us, but in the same way only one Lord, administrator of all things, who is also our ruler (1 Cor. viii. 6). Therefore, all things in the world must serve us, since we belong to Christ, and are under Him, just as He is under God (1 Cor. iii. 22 f.). But, in saying this, Paul cannot have thought of Him as an intermediary being or inferior God, like those of heathen religions; nor as an angel, since these celestial beings are, throughout His writings, simply servants. We must have rested content with the explanation that he regarded this heavenly Christ and Lord as unique in His nature, and so a mystery of the faith, had he not given us a distinct key to the difficulty. The solution lies in the fact that he does not think of Him as man after the fashion and order of the human race, but rather as man in the sense of a higher, supernatural world (1 Cor. xv. 45-49). In contrast with Adam and all his descendants, He is the Second Man, the Man from heaven, and celestial in His nature.

As such, He is in complete possession of the Divine Spirit; nay, it is possible to call Him absolutely 'the Spirit' (2 Cor. iii. 17). But it is **on** the lines of a man with a spiritual body that He is conceived, and with an intelligence that thinks wholly in the Divine Spirit (1 Cor. ii. 16). This conception was to some extent a necessary consequence of the Apostle's presuppositions, and was a creation of his own thought, but it was no doubt suggested by certain Jewish ideas. We need not turn to Philo's notion of the heavenly man, as ideal man; a conception existing in Palestinian theology is sufficient. According to this, the Messiah, the Son of Man, was already prepared in heaven, and reserved until the time of His revelation. In any case Paul has stated that He came from heaven, and therefore was previously existent there.

This at once decides the question whether Paul supposed the Son of God to have existed before His appearance as man. Not that we can appeal to 1 Cor. viii. 6 in support of this position, for there He is designated, not as the Divine Agent in creation, but as the Mediator of God's present activity in the world. But, on the other hand, there is no ambiguity in 1 Cor. x. 4, where it is shown that Christ, in accompanying the Israelites through the wilderness, in the form of the Rock that supplied them with water, was even in these ancient times a personal agent in sacred history. And still further, Paul has described the entrance of Jesus Christ into His historical human life as a voluntary act, by which He gave up His riches and became poor, in order that through His poverty believers might become rich (2 Cor. viii. 9). In Phil. ii. 7 the sense is identical: in becoming man 'He emptied Himself,' namely of that which He formerly possessed. He lived in the form or manner of God, in equality with God, and on entering upon His human life on earth took in exchange the form of a servant, of a slave, and humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, and yet His earlier rank would have enabled Him to adopt any position He chose. For this submission He was afterwards rewarded when God made Him Lord. From these words we also learn that He became the Lord only at His exalta-

tion. On the other hand, they establish two results : In the first place, He had a personal existence before His human birth, and in the second, His earlier life was divine, and absolutely opposed to the dependent life of man upon earth. His Divinity is here defined as a generic idea by this contrast with a servile position, and therein lies the conception of a supramundane existence which is not inconsistent with the uniqueness of God the Father, nor, for that very reason, precludes the notion of Christ having been created by Him. The essential difference between this creed and the Jewish conception of the Messiah's pre-existence, lies in the mechanical character of the latter. Paul adds an element of life. Christ becomes man by a personal act, and this to the Apostle is in some measure necessary to compensate for his neglect of the Messianic life of Jesus. By this means the collective view of the ethical fact of the incarnation takes the place of the life-picture of His deeds. Precisely because of this, again, the conception is perfectly consistent with the notion of the Second Man who comes from heaven. For the heavenly descent is equivalent to the thought that He was in the form of God, and Paul can therefore also say without hesitation, that it was Jesus, the Christ, who first existed in the Divine form, and then humbled Himself, just as he says of Him that He was rich and voluntarily submitted to poverty. Had he not given his doctrine of Christ this backward extension, the human life of Christ would have become for him a sort of impersonal event, and Jesus a mere instrument. His doctrine of the pre-existence accordingly enables him to look upon Christ's work as a personal act, and to preserve the bond between Him and humanity. But the course of Christ's life in the form which it thus assumed in Paul's mind came undoubtedly to correspond to his mode of thought; it passes through its opposite to the unity of the highest solution.

### § 12. *The Gospel.*

The belief in the Risen Christ as Son of God and Lord is inseparably accompanied by the experience which was expressed



in the language of the primitive Church as the present possession of the kingdom of God, and Paul's position is identical with that of the earliest Christians, when he sees (*e.g.* Gal. iii. 2 ff.) the proof of that experience in the reception of the Holy Spirit, and all its effects. It is this Spirit which lives in the hearts of believers, and enables them to address God as their Father (Gal. iv. 6; Rom. viii. 14). Thus they 'have the witness that they are God's children, God's sons.' And this is followed by the perfect enjoyment of present blessedness in the love of Christ, and of sovereignty over all things in the world in the love of God. And it is also followed by the irresistible power of the spiritual impulse to lead the divine life, whose definite form is due to the fact that it is a life in Christ and in imitation of Him, proceeding from Him, and realised in believers as His body. Paul's originality, however, does not consist merely in the splendid unity with which he presents his conception, but in perfecting the thought involved in the conflict through which he had himself passed, and in whose light he now views the results attained through Christ. The original disciples, so far as we know, had indeed come to Christ in a variety of ways, and certainly none without breaking with his past; but there was no breach with the law or with faith in it; Paul was the first to forsake the law with a perfect consciousness of what he was doing, and this necessarily exerted a far-reaching influence on his doctrine of the means of salvation. His doctrine is novel in two decisive points,—in its definition of the demand made upon man, and in that of the Divine plan. As regards the former, Paul indeed gained Peter on his side, because he also had to recognise that man does not attain righteousness by the works of the law, and that therefore faith in Jesus Christ must add the essential condition; but this did not involve any opposition between the law and faith as means of salvation. This antagonism was first set up by Paul in the thought that to aim at righteousness by means of the law obstructs the way of faith, and that this way can only be found by the absolute renunciation of the attempt to reach righteousness by the law. The second point

in Paul's departure from the earlier doctrine turns on the conception of the death of Christ. We have already seen that the primitive Church, after their horror had been overcome by faith, sought to recognise in that event a saving influence, and therefore a Divine purpose, and that they learned to see in it the best means of accomplishing the purpose of Christ's mission, and of securing the forgiveness of sins. Paul's doctrine is related to this view, but it has assumed an entirely different form. According to his conception, the death of Jesus was not only the completion of His life-work, but the end and object of His appearance upon earth. Both doctrines, however, that of the law and justification, as well as that of the death of Christ, are closely related to his doctrine of sin. Logically the latter precedes, historically it followed, the doctrine of the law.

### § 13. *Sin.*

From the first the preaching of the gospel meant the declaration of the forgiveness of sins. Paul was at one with the early Christians when he declared, 1 Cor. xv. 3, 'that Christ died on account of our sins;' Gal. i. 4, 'that He gave Himself for our sins.' To the same effect is the indication of aim in the latter passage as being 'to deliver us from this present evil world.' The world is evil because of the multitude of sins. Paul, however, speaks not only of sins, but also absolutely of sin; and this is not merely a collective term for sins, but the category that gives unity to his conception he applies to a condition and a power which he can thus speak of as if it were personal. 'Jews and Greeks are under sin' (Rom. iii. 9); 'sin has come into the world' (Rom. v. 12), and 'it rules there' (v. 21, vi. 6, 12); it lives, deceives, kills, and acts in mankind (vii. 9, 11, 17). Even after we make allowance for the figurative mode of expression, there remains the idea of an active force. This power of sin is established inductively from its universal extent and dreadful effects, and in Rom. i. ii. the argument is shown to apply to Jews

and Gentiles, the two divisions of mankind which Paul is considering. To this general and objective proof is added the evidence furnished by the spiritual experience of the individual, who, in spite of the resistance of his will and inner conflict, has fallen helpless under the power of sin (Rom. vii.—like a slave, vi. 17). The proof from experience would not, however, be sufficient without the support of Holy Scripture, which is especially decisive since it is addressed to the people who are governed by the Divine law (Rom. iii. 19). First, the universality of sin is conclusively shown; but Scripture is also used to explain how this condition of matters can itself be a law, the consequence of a universal decree (Rom. vii. 23). For it is there implied that this power exists by the will of God. What Scripture declares is willed by God. The one proposition, Scripture has included all under sin, coincides with the other, God has determined it (Gal. iii. 22; Rom. xi. 32).

When we ask how Paul explains this power of sin, the answer may be sought in two directions; the one points to Adam's transgression, the other, however, to the fleshly quality of human nature. Paul has discussed Adam's transgression and its consequences only once in our sources (Rom. v. 12-21). Now it is remarkable that he does not there say that sin emanated and was transmitted to all his descendants from Adam's fall. That was, of course, the means by which sin entered the world, but yet it is not the sin that is said to have extended to all men; it is the death which accompanied sin. And this transmission of death is not the effect of Adam's transgression, but on the contrary is conditioned by the fact that all have themselves sinned. If Paul has been influenced here by the Jewish view that Adam's descendants were already present in him, yet he has not concluded from it that they sinned with him, or were fated to inherit sin from him. He has combined it with another idea, that the Divine condemnation—and this it is which brings death—extends over the whole race (ver. 18, 19). His view of the effect of Adam's history is determined by the comparison drawn between it and

that of Christ's. But the latter is exclusively a judgment of the Divine grace, by which the many who receive this grace are pronounced just, *i.e.* in harmony with the will of God and well-pleasing to Him. In the comparison of the two successions, however, Paul's starting-point is not its first, but its second line. He begins with Christ, and regards Adam from the standpoint thus obtained. Now that all are justified through Christ is the consequence of His appearance, but yet the gift only becomes effective where it is accepted. And, in the same way, Paul thinks of the condemnation as passed upon all with Adam, but yet it is only applied because they themselves sin. The universal sentence undoubtedly anticipates the transgression, but only because it is a Divine judgment, and as such is not at all dependent on the course of events.

Paul has said nothing in this passage about the fall of Adam himself. One thing only he emphasises,—that it consisted in the transgression of an express command. Precisely for this reason his conduct was only repeated in history after the time of Moses, that is to say, after a Divine law, whose commands were capable of being broken, had come into the world, and therefore we are led to look to Paul's explanation of the transgression of the law for a means of explaining the fall or first sin (Rom. vii. 11; 2 Cor. xi. 3). According to this view the command provoked sin; when lust was forbidden, lusts were called into life. But that does not mean that sin was created by the command; it was already there, but without life or consciousness. In presence of the commandment it sprang into life. Now the question is whether this may also be applied retrospectively to Adam's transgression and its conditions. That it may is suggested by the fact that Paul when explaining the above-described effect of the law rests his argument on the ground that we are 'of flesh' (*σάρκινος*, Rom. vii. 14), *i.e.* not carnally disposed, but in our nature constituted of flesh. For this condition must also apply to Adam. We are also led to the same view by the saying (1 Cor. xv. 50), that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of

God, and by the whole comparison, connected with it, between the first and last Adam (ver. 44-49). Here the points under discussion are the bodily resurrection, and the possibility of another kind of body, which should correspond with the life of the spirit in the future, *i.e.* a pneumatic body. This question, accordingly, refers wholly to the natural distinction between the earthly and the heavenly life. It is not to be overlooked, however, that the heavenly is at the same time the spiritual, and that the character of the earthly body is therefore inferentially opposed to the spiritual life, the moral life restored by redemption. This becomes still clearer when we remember that the relation is also denoted by the distinction between a psychical and a spiritual body; this means that the earthly body is indeed necessarily united to a soul which includes also intelligence (*νοῦς*), but that this soul is neither capable of knowing God, nor of fulfilling the Divine command, but on the contrary is unfit to be the seat and organ of the Divine Spirit through whom such fulfilment is possible. In perfect agreement with this is the statement that the body is no longer capable of being freed from the curse of death (Rom. viii. 10). But the general unfitness of the natural body for union with the Spirit of God is not based on the sin that has intervened. Paul concludes (1 Cor. xv. 45 ff.), from the comparison between Adam and Christ, that, according to the order of the world itself, the psychical must first be present, and afterwards, in the second section of universal history, but not till then, the spiritual was decreed to take its place. This order was not conditioned by the entrance of sin. On the contrary, it is itself, in its first period, the pre-conceived condition of sin, a view which is in absolute agreement with the thought expressed in Rom. vii., that sin, at first dead, continued without life until it was quickened through the command.

The all-important category in this connection is that of the flesh, which is opposed to the spirit precisely as sin is opposed to righteousness. The flesh is the expression for the power of sin in the natural life; it appears as the source of all kinds of sin; and



its might consists, not merely in the inertia that opposes the demands and impulses of the spirit, but in an active resistance (Gal. v. 17) to the spirit, and even to God (Rom. viii. 7). There is nowhere any indication that the nature of the earthly man first became flesh through the entrance of sin. It is rather to be concluded from 1 Cor. xv. 50 that it is precisely his nature, the constitution of the earthly body from dust, that makes man a creature of flesh and blood, just as it has been shown in Rom. vii. 14 that the ultimate reason for the power of sin in man is to be sought for in the fact that he is made of natural flesh. In no place where the antithesis of flesh and spirit is broadly discussed is there any hint that the flesh, considered in its moral aspect, is a secondary growth. It is only its full moral influence that is to be thought of as a later development, in the same degree as Paul, having conceived sin as in itself existent, yet attributed its activity to the law (Rom. vii. 8 ff.). But the law is incapable of attaining its object; it was weak on account of the flesh (Rom. viii. 3). After all this there can hardly be a doubt that for Paul the antithesis of flesh and spirit ultimately rests on the nature of the flesh, *i.e.* on the natural quality of man. And thus is obviated the difficulty that otherwise arises from the supposition of a confused and ever-changing use of the word in different senses. The whole conception is best elucidated by means of the question whether Paul supposes the nature of the first man to have been pneumatic before his transgression; and this question, in view of 1 Cor. xv. 45 ff. is undoubtedly to be answered in the negative. This is of course not incompatible with the power to understand the Divine command, or with a secret inclination to it fostered by his own mind, before any more than after the fall (Rom. vii. 22). But the power to fulfil the Divine will is not included in this; it only comes through the Spirit.

Paul makes use of all these positions to explain the fact that all men have sinned. The universality of sin is embodied for him in the notion of the flesh. The list of the sins which proceed from the flesh proves that he by no means limits it to sensuality

or sensuous desire; every revolt against God's command and the higher order is comprehended in it. But yet the revolt was clearly imaged in the strength of the sensuous existence, with its independent impulses guided by no command, and directed to unrestricted self-assertion; and this tendency is inseparably connected with the natural character of man's life in soul and body. The notion of the flesh is therefore equally an image in which the power of sin is represented, and a middle term that explains its origin. Nor should it be forgotten that the opposition of sin and righteousness, or of flesh and spirit, is at the same time the opposition of the earthly and the heavenly, and that therefore the earthly nature of man must coincide with that of sinful flesh at the root. This view obtains its crowning proof in the fact that the opposition does not cease, but persists in the contention of two forces independent of each other, even in the new life and under the rule of the Spirit.

The view which refers the universality of sin to a sort of nature-power exists in Paul side by side with and unaffected by his belief in man's freedom and guilt in his transgression, a belief that is not even shaken by his conception of the consequences of Adam's fall. This is in itself no extraordinary or unheard-of fact. We might rest content with pointing for its explanation to Jewish teaching, in which both doctrines stand side by side in the same way: on the one hand we have the undoubted responsibility for breach of the law, and on the other the idea of the sensuous nature as the source of all sin and impurity. But the matter assumes a different form in Paul. He has a supreme explanation under which the difficulty disappears. The universality of sin is to him a Divine decree. What humanity was from Adam until Christ results from this Divine decree; it is the counterpart of the new order, and must, according to the Divine plan, precede it. For the rest, so far as regards his apostleship to the Gentiles, it is self-evident how greatly it must have been promoted by the doctrine of the power of the flesh,—a doctrine everywhere intelligible in the heathen world,—and by the splendid

description of the inner conflicts which arose in man in consequence of that power.

#### § 14. *The Law.*

With the doctrine of sin is inseparably connected Paul's doctrine of the law. There is no overt sin without law; it is essentially a transgression of the command. In connection with this it is also already implied that the law cannot lead man to God, nor procure his salvation. But the explanations given by the Apostle of his position regarding the law appear at first sight to be as involved as the above negative proposition is simple. This doctrine above all necessarily reflected the Apostle's conversion. In it the breach with his past was completed, and the force necessary for this breach may be gauged if we realise that the school of Judaism to which he had belonged not only regarded the observance of the law as the only means of salvation, but had almost come to pay it Divine honours—in a sense to deify it. His experience at the time of his conversion is expressed by Paul in the declaration that he learned to count as loss what he had formerly counted as gain in comparison with the overpowering knowledge of Christ Jesus; that for His sake he abandoned everything; that he counted it all rubbish in order to gain Christ (Phil. iii. 7 f.). But when we consider the different passages in which he describes his view of the original nature of the law, the purpose and value of its institution, his expressions seem to be inconsistent. The extreme limits are to be found, on the one hand, in the statements of the Roman letter: 'the law is holy, the command is holy, just, and good;' 'the law is spiritual;' 'when I against my will do the evil, then I recognise the goodness of the law' (vii. 12 ff.); and on the other hand in the judgment pronounced in the Galatian letter upon the Christians who are prepared to accept the law: that in observing its ceremonial directions they revert to the position that they occupied in the days of their heathenism (iv. 9). No doubt Paul is speaking here

of the ceremonial section of the law, while in the letter to the Romans he is discussing its moral precepts. But he has nowhere expressly distinguished between these two sections. In his eyes it is the undivided whole in which the Divine will is to be found revealed, and he therefore identifies with it also any other knowledge of that will existent outside of the Mosaic revelation. The Divine will is always the law, and the Thora is nothing but this will; it is its complete expression; and to this extent Paul does not diverge from Jewish belief. But while, according to the scribes, it was the sure way of salvation, he conceives that God must have designed it for another object. Besides, the relation between the statements in Romans and Galatians is not of such a nature as to compel us to suppose that these letters contain different views of the matter, and indicate a change in Paul's mind. The apparently most inconsistent utterances do not involve for him any contradiction. According to 2 Cor. iii. 7, 13, the veiling of Moses' face has at one and the same time two meanings, namely, the brightness and glory of the law, which the eye could not endure; and again, its impermanence, which was not to be looked upon. And as regards the Galatian letter, side by side with the judgment on the lower position of the legal religion, we find in it, no less than in Romans, the full recognition of the divinity and sanctity of the law. It is enough that he quotes the verse: 'who does the law will live by it' (iii. 12). And he says, exactly as in Romans, that 'the whole law is fulfilled in the command to love our neighbour' (Gal. v. 14; Rom. xiii. 9); but this is neither more nor less than to say that the complete contents of the law are covered by the highest and most comprehensive command of the gospel. On the other hand, Romans, although in it Paul has no occasion to speak directly as in Galatians of the ceremonial contents of the law, none the less contains, side by side with the recognition of its Divine origin and sacredness, the statements that its only aim was to complete the transgression (v. 20), and that the Jews had by its assistance attained no greater success than the Gentiles. After his conversion Paul never vacillated, nor

made any change in his view of the law. This doctrine above all was necessarily settled by him at the first, and its fixity was essential so long as he held to his calling. But the coherence of all its parts is also of such a sort as to admit of no deviation.

If the gospel was to break through the limitations of Jewish opinions it could only do so by the conviction, not only that the law as a matter of fact failed to justify, but that it was not given with any such aim. Paul gave birth to this thought. If, however, we would understand his exposition of it, we must not forget that he still regarded Holy Scripture, and therefore the law, as absolutely Divine. This precludes the plausible explanation that he looked upon it merely as preliminary to the gospel, and that, as such, it was an imperfect revelation of the Divine will. He therefore accepted the paradox involved in the two propositions, that the law contained the commands of God, by whose fulfilment man obtains life and righteousness, and that as a matter of fact its only effect was to produce the knowledge of sin. To us the solution of the paradox might at once suggest itself in the thought, that sin prevents the fulfilment of the law, and makes it impossible. But to the Apostle such a solution was not satisfactory. When he reflected on his own efforts in the time of his Jewish subservience to the law, he found that it was not merely sin which had hindered him from reaching perfection, but that his very efforts had prevented him from knowing the true means of righteousness appointed by God. Legalism, the very intention of becoming just by fulfilling the commandments, by works, had been wrong. And when he looked at the Jews who retained their unbelief in the face of the gospel, he was convinced of the same fact; it was not imperfection, but the effort to reach righteousness that kept them away from the gospel. Their judgment was an immediate result of seeking righteousness by means of works, *i.e.* of seeking their own righteousness. Paul's solution of the paradox was therefore necessarily different from that suggested above. It could not be found on the side of man, it had to be sought for on that of God. And in fact he discovered in the sacred writings that



they had already, long before the revelation of Christ, instituted the way of the gospel, and proclaimed a righteousness through Divine grace and man's faith, both in distinct statements, and especially in the grand example of Abraham, the national ancestor, and bearer of the Divine blessing (Rom. iv.). This proclamation of the righteousness of faith not only proceeded side by side with that of the law; it had anticipated it. Thus Abraham had become just, and that long before the time of Moses: and not only so, but he became just even before his own introduction of circumcision, which therefore could not have signified his acceptance of the legal covenant. But since, further, the purpose of Abraham's faith-righteousness was not exhausted in his own individual case, since, on the contrary, he received the promise for the world, and accordingly no other righteousness could afterwards exist than that of faith, then it followed that the law was not revealed in order to make man just; God must have had another aim in creating it. This intention Paul defines: 'it was given on account of the transgressions,' *i.e.* to make the transgression complete. For this also Paul found a proof in Scripture. Scripture itself proved that all who concerned themselves with the works of the law had come under the curse; since 'it curses every one who does not keep the law in all its details' (Gal. iii. 10). And the sayings of Scripture which accused all who were under the law, without exception, of sin, proved that its only purpose was to impart the knowledge of sin (Rom. iii. 20). But the Apostle had been led to exactly the same conclusion by his spiritual experience; the commands of the law had only aroused his lusts and imparted life to them.

The question whether, in Paul's opinion, the law is or is not adapted from its nature to make man righteous, cannot therefore be answered by a simple yes or no. It is improper to put it in this way. The law in itself, as it comes from God, is undoubtedly, when thought of as fulfilled, at one with righteousness. But the law, as it exists and was given in history, is not merely when confronted by the power of sin converted into its opposite; but

it never could justify, because that was not at all the purpose for which God gave it. Its object is the completion of sin, and it promotes salvation only indirectly, in so far as the servitude in which it places man has an educative effect, whose last result must be, 'through the law to die unto the law.' This subordinate destination, in which it becomes merely the means by which another method of salvation is to be reached, Paul now finds to be also supported by Scripture, in a conception borrowed, not so much indeed from Scripture itself, as from its Jewish exposition (Gal. iii. 19 f.). According to this, the revelation of the law came through angels, and Paul looks upon it as a proof for his conception, since the effectual plan of salvation must come directly from God. But, further, the intermediary position of Moses in the communication of the law convinces him that it is not the free and absolute ordinance of God, as it would require to be to secure salvation. And again, the intention and value of the law are shown by the fact that it imposes duties which bind man with his striving for salvation in an external relation to the material world; and thus his position under the law becomes similar to that occupied by the heathen (Gal. iv. 10). Besides this, the law has made the judgment of God's wrath quite as clear as the evidence for it among the heathen, while, on the other hand, mercy is revealed to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews. But precisely in this respect it belongs to the plan of revelation and of the realisation of salvation. For the uselessness of all attempts at righteousness by our own deeds serves to pave the way to righteousness by means of faith.

And in this last idea the doctrine itself is also justified. The artificial form of its thought has arisen from the effort to prove the freedom of the Gospel in its full extent from Scripture itself, and to defeat the Jews with their own faith. Through it all there runs like a ray of light the knowledge that has been gained, that whatever righteousness depends on one's own works carries with it death.

§ 15. *The Death of Christ.*

The two doctrines of sin and law taken together give us the determining points of view for what is commonly called the work of Christ, or for the doctrine concerning that which believers receive from Him. According to our mode of thought we are inclined to suppose that we are here concerned with the life and death of Christ, and what has been won for us by the former as well as by the latter. But the life and its results almost disappear in Paul. Yet he also discusses a double influence, namely, that of Christ's death, and that of His present exalted life. As regards the latter, the complete experience of His people in communion with Christ is always summed up by Paul in the thought that 'they died with Him, in order to live with Him.'

There was on the whole no difference of opinion between Paul and his predecessors as to the meaning of Christ's death. We know, and not only from 1 Cor. xv. 3, that he traced his doctrine that Christ died for our sins to the tradition that had been handed down to him. But it is also evident that it was his most important line of proof, when he desired to rest his argument on a proposition contested by no one, and accepted even by his opponents. Paul's statement concerning the death of Christ, Rom. iii. 25, was undisputed; it was only his inference from it that served to refute his opponents; and the same is true of v. 8, 2 Cor. v. 15. The preaching of the Cross was everywhere recognised as the preaching of the gospel (1 Cor. i. 18). The agreement of Paul and Peter in holding that the forgiveness of sins was to be found in Christ (Gal. ii. 16), applied also without doubt to His death. So far as our knowledge of the contemporary Jews goes, even they were not all indisposed to the belief that the Messiah should pass through sufferings, although it met with opposition on the part of a section of them. In the second century it was not this that was disputed by the Jews; the crucifixion alone remained an offence to them (as in 1 Cor. i. 23). For the Jewish Christians the suffering Messiah formed the transition to the crucified.

Paul's task now was to determine more accurately the significance of this death. He undoubtedly looked upon it as a sacrifice, and a sacrifice presented on account of sin. Now it is remarkable that he has nowhere argued that it took the place of and superseded the old sacrifices; his opposition to faith in the law was confined to the law of works, and did not affect the law of sacrifices or their atoning power. From this it is apparent that the Jewish Christianity which opposed him no longer retained its belief in the latter. That this was the standpoint of the later Ebionitic Jewish Christians is known. But from what has just been said we must refer it back to the primitive Church itself. And the result is only to confirm and to explain further the fact that in his doctrine of the death of Christ for sin the Apostle stood on the common ground of the primitive faith.

The next point in the account given of the doctrine by the Apostle is its relation to the Jewish conception of an expiatory sacrifice. Paul has applied this term to Christ's death in Rom. iii. 25, where he mentions the blood poured out, and in the same way, Rom. viii. 3, he has designated it as a sin-offering. Further, it is a purifying sacrifice after the type of the Passover (1 Cor. v. 7). And in another direction the expressions, 2 Cor. v. 21, and Gal. iii. 13 ('Christ, who knew no sin, has become sin and a curse for us') also point to the same conclusion. But the very variety displayed in these terms suggests that we are not to seek in them the thought from which Paul started, but rather an illustration of his thought by means of current ideas which are employed by him more like figures of speech. The thought of an expiatory sacrifice is deprived of its proper support, because there is nowhere connected with it a hint that it was demanded by God's retributive justice. When Christ was set forth as an expiatory sacrifice, Rom. iii. 25, it was of course on account of the former forbearance with sins under God's long-suffering rule. But, as the context clearly shows, it was not done with a view now to recover penalties, but in order to re-establish righteousness in the new age. (Cf. v. 18 f., viii. 3 f.)

God was not reconciled by an expiatory sacrifice, but He reconciled the world to Himself (2 Cor. v. 19). Paul has nowhere spoken of a wrath of God dispelled by the death of Christ. What He accomplished by that death was throughout and everywhere the work of His love, and it is impossible therefore to conceive of the existence in God Himself of any obstacle to its realisation. 'God proves His love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us' (Rom. v. 8; cf. iii. 24 ff., viii. 32). 'It was God who reconciled the world unto Himself in Christ' (not by ordaining a punishment for its benefit, but) 'by not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and by setting up among us the word of reconciliation' (2 Cor. v. 19). God's work was not one of expiation, but of redemption (Rom. iii. 24). This love of God Christ served in His obedience, and the essential character of His action was His self-sacrifice. Thus it became possible to represent His death as sacrificial; but it does not necessarily follow that it assumed the form of a punishment. In the time of our weakness, and therefore for the sake of men who were still without God, He underwent death, and thus showed the highest conceivable self-sacrifice of a man for men (Rom. v. 6 f.). God's love and His love coincided in this (Rom. viii. 32, 35, 39; 2 Cor. v. 15 (viii. 9); Gal. i. 4; Phil. ii. 6-8).

The necessity and the effect of Jesus' death must therefore have had another ground. It was the means of redemption (Rom. iii. 24; 1 Cor. i. 30); of deliverance (Rom. viii. 2, Gal. i. 4); or, figuratively, of ransom (Gal. iii. 13, iv. 5). The thought peculiar to Paul is that by it the power of sin, and, at the same time, of death and of the law, was destroyed. This is not a second view, concurrent with the notion of an expiation. It is the governing thought to which all else is subordinate. If Christ Jesus became an expiatory sacrifice, that means merely that, by His sacrifice of self, compensation was now made for God's previous forbearance with sin, that, in accordance with His essential justice, He might henceforth by this means impart righteousness to men (Rom. iii. 25 ff.). What was effected through Christ was a judicial act, by



which a life-giving verdict was secured in favour of all men (Rom. v. 18). But if we now ask why the death of Jesus was necessary for this, we find the answer in Rom. viii. 3: 'Sin is thus judged in the flesh, in it sin has been destroyed.' Therefore (Rom. vi. 10) it is said, 'His dying (that He has died) was a death once for all to sin.' The result of His death, the death of a man (in the flesh), was that sin was at an end. In this sense He died for all, and therefore all men have died with Him (2 Cor. v. 15, Gal. iii. 20). This universal effect was rendered possible by the fact that 'He knew no sin' (2 Cor. v. 21). In His death the spirit of life, as another and higher law, gained mastery over the law of sin and death (Rom. viii. 1); for He was the Man from heaven (1 Cor. xv. 47 f.). Therefore the effect of His death was that 'the old order has passed away; it has become new; he who is in Christ is a new creature' (2 Cor. v. 17). What is true of the power of sin is equally and necessarily true of the power inseparable from it, viz., that of the law. As by the death of Jesus sin was destroyed in the flesh, so also was the law. And this means in effect that as through Christ man had died to sin, he had also died to the law; he was free from it, as Paul shows us by comparing the responsibility of mankind to that under the marriage tie, which binds only until death (Rom. vii. 1 ff.). For the rest, it results from what has been stated above, that in Paul's view freedom from guilt and punishment naturally follows, since these are attached to the law. 'There is no longer any condemnation to those who are in Christ' (Rom. viii. 1). Paul knows nothing of the doctrine that a man must first be freed from the guilt of sin, and only then be capable of renewal; guilt depends upon the law. He knows nothing of a punitive justice of God, which first of all, and unconditionally, demands satisfaction.

It is wholly in accordance not only with his doctrine of the Person of Christ, but with the great Apostle's general mode of thought, that he views the death-work of Christ from this highest standpoint; that it is to him the destruction of a world and its power by a higher power and order; and that each factor is

destroyed in its own sphere, the flesh being annulled in the flesh, the law by the law, and death by death. But the conquering power is different in kind from the conquered. It is the antithesis of spirit and flesh that here finds its solution. The flesh with its sin is a force of nature, and its power is destiny; the spirit is a moral force, its power is our personal action, as is our following of its guidance in personal appropriation. And what is accomplished in the death of Christ as a triumph of power over power is the work of love. The supreme value of the conception lies in this spiritualising of the transaction. In this we have also the strength of this faith: we are dead with Christ in the might of the love that impels us to die for Him.

The correct conception of the Pauline doctrine of the value of Christ's death involves the completion of this part of His work by His exaltation and His activity when exalted. Throughout the writings of the Apostle, the earthly life comes into play (as in Gal. iv. 4 f., Phil. ii. 6 ff., 2 Cor. viii. 9) only in the meritorious act of voluntary humiliation, the necessary precursor of the death upon the cross by which it is consummated; this is expressed with especial distinctness in Rom. viii. 3 f. The whole life of Jesus, according to Rom. v. 19, is to be looked on as a single and unique judicial fact, issuing in and summed up by His death as the end and aim of His life. The relation of the after-life to His death is of a wholly different character; for the latter would have been robbed of its power and significance had it not been succeeded by means of the resurrection by this life with its evidence, the only proof, that He had but died to condemn the flesh, and that the spirit of life was in Him. Precisely for this reason His resurrection not only proved who He was, but it also completed His work for men. 'He was delivered up (in death) for our sins, and was raised for our justification' (Rom. iv. 25). 'In His death we are dead, with His life we live' (Rom. vi. 4 ff.; Gal. ii. 20). It is not merely that the confident expectation of our resurrection is founded on His (1 Cor. xv. 12 ff.): this is only the last result, viz. that the new life will, at some time in the future, be attested

in the body also (Rom. viii. 11). The essential effect of his new life is the life of the present in the spirit. Paul represents this in two ways. In a direct form : Christ is said to dwell spiritually in His people : 'it is no longer I that live ; Christ liveth in me' (Gal. ii. 20). In an indirect : through the reception of the Divine Spirit which Christ possesses and imparts (Rom. viii. 9 f.). In substance these two statements are identical. 'No one can call Jesus his Lord unless by the Holy Spirit' (1 Cor. xii. 3). 'It is the unity of the Spirit which makes believers the body of Christ' (1 Cor. xii. 4 ff.).

The work of Christ, as Paul conceived it, was precisely in this respect the perfect expression of his own individual experience. He started from the conviction that his risen Lord had revealed Himself to him, and that conviction was confirmed by his experience of the spiritual power exerted by his faith. With this to guide him, he interpreted the death of Jesus ; it could only signify the destruction of the old, the annihilation of the power of the flesh along with the law, in which he now saw the cause of his wholly perverse effort in his previous years. And it is here that his faith in Christ and His work was distinguished from that of his predecessors. Their starting-point they found in their companionship with Jesus ; His death followed a personal intercourse in whose light they interpreted it ; and it was through their hope of His return that they reconciled themselves to it. For Paul the present life in the spirit came first, and formed the starting-point of his interpretation of the crucifixion. All that preceded was merely preliminary, so much so, that he was able to say : 'we also have known Christ according to the flesh, now know we Him so no more' (2 Cor. v. 16). The separate sections comprehended in the work of Christ were the same to both parties ; their order, also, was the same, as it was implied in the matter itself. But the centre of gravity was different. Paul put first what the primitive Apostles put last. Nor can we fail to perceive the significance of this doctrine for the mission to the Gentiles. The further the historical details receded into the background,

the fainter also became what was alien and provincial in Christianity, and the more prominent grew that which was essential and of universal interest to mankind. The Gentile who now believed in Him possessed the whole Christ in his own experience; he was dealing with momentous spiritual facts; the subjects of his religion were the common questions of the moral life, the experiences open to all men.

### § 16. *Grace and Justification.*

The doctrine of the work of Christ is naturally followed by the conception of man's salvation. As in the former everything proceeds from the love of God, so the fundamental thought in the latter is the revelation of that love as grace, rescuing the sinner and securing man's salvation. The effect of grace in reference to the previous condition is redemption, and, regarded as the changed relation to God, reconciliation. Looked at in its completed result, it is expressed in the words that man has become a son of God. In the notion of Grace we have directly the opposite of the way of the law; the salvation which man receives is purely a gift of God, it is a revelation of the Divine will which he has to accept by means of faith. Now this contrast finds its distinctive expression in the Apostle's doctrine of justification; in it his conception of the gospel became a creed that cut him off sharply from every shade of Jewish Christianity, and, marking as it does a new historical departure, it has always, and rightly, been looked upon as the central point and foundation of his whole teaching as to salvation. Yet we must apply it with a certain preliminary reservation. Of the great letters of the Apostle, those to the Corinthians do not discuss justification at all. It only comes into the foreground in Romans and Galatians. The reason is evident. In these epistles the Apostle is arguing against the Jewish doctrine of righteousness by means of the law; and it is only in connection with this controversy that he has given his own doctrine of justification its prominent position, or made it the expression of his conception

of salvation in its essential principles. Wherever this contrast is wanting, it recedes into the background. In the letter to the Philippians it is therefore touched upon only in this connection, while the Apostle immediately passes on to other thoughts, since the controversy did not here call for a comprehensive exposition. Nor can we overlook the fact that, even in Romans and Galatians, the doctrine takes a secondary place, wherever he is discussing the life under salvation in its origin and realisation within the Christian communion. We may therefore, without going too far, suppose not only that the greater or less prominence given to the doctrine was determined by the wants of those he was addressing, but that in his independent doctrinal system it did not occupy the chief place.

For Paul's doctrine of Justification the following statements are unquestionably decisive:—‘The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith’ (Rom. i. 17). ‘It has been manifested apart from the law—as the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ—they have all sinned, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus’ (Rom. iii. 21 ff.). ‘The Gentiles who followed not after righteousness, attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith; but Israel, following after the law of righteousness, did not arrive at the law’ (Rom. ix. 30 f.). ‘Being ignorant of God’s righteousness, attending only to their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God’ (Rom. x. 3). ‘But if it is by grace it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace’ (Rom. xi. 6). From all these statements we conclude that Paul does not merely seek to negative the belief that man may become just by an observance of the Jewish law. He precludes the possibility of becoming righteous, wherever the attempt is made by means of works, or moral self-assertion. It would therefore be quite contrary to his meaning to suppose that the justification of the sinner consists in the reception from the Divine grace of such powers and qualities as enable him to attain righteousness, and thereupon to be adjudged just by God. The justification of the



sinner is, in Paul's view, manifestly a single transaction, and independent of any transference of such qualities, because it is accomplished through the work of Christ; thenceforth it exists in its complete form for all. In this sense, therefore, it can be safely said that Paul makes justification consist in a simple judicial verdict. That is, the grace of God takes a different view of man from that afforded by his own character. But we must here guard against limiting God's treatment of man to the thought of a judgment. The verdict looked on as a judicial act can be applied only when we speak of the legal method, and the question of the fulfilment of the law. But that which takes place in justification by faith in Jesus is no mere judicial sentence. And while Paul uses the same word in both instances, yet this is due to the comparison with the legal method. The notion of the judicial verdict does not correspond to that of the Divine righteousness used to describe the state of man. Even under the law the judgment is only the presupposition; the righteousness, however, which according to the conceptions of Jews and Jewish Christians is to be attained by its means, is something more. It is the realisation of their belonging wholly to God, and of their participation in all the rights of the Divine covenant. In this sense the thought was inherited from the later prophets. So, also, this righteousness obtained by man through Christ is designated by Paul the righteousness of God, not merely to denote that it is valid in His sight, or that He recognises it as equivalent to the fulfilment of the law, —to denote, therefore, the passing over and forgiveness of sins; but it means that this righteousness is produced and constituted by God as a state which He Himself can alone impart. God has shown His righteousness in the redemption of man through Christ (Rom. iii. 25). These words are explained by Paul in the following verse: 'that He might Himself be just, and the justifier of him who believes in Jesus' (ver. 26). How the fact that God justifies proves His righteousness is only to be explained by assuming that Paul identified the latter with the saving energy natural to Him, and evinced by Him in His treatment of the believer. On the same

grounds we can also explain how the righteousness and the glory of God can (Rom. iii. 21, 23) be mentioned in the same connection. To say that the sinner has not the latter is to say that he has not the former. Conversely, in justifying those who have been foreordained and called, God has also glorified them (Rom. viii. 30). The vessels of mercy are prepared for glory (Rom. ix. 23); they are those who have attained righteousness (ver. 30). Both terms designate the same state, but in different aspects; the one indicates the essential relation to God, the other the blessing involved in it. The case is identical with the notion of sonship. In this category are summed up the blessings enjoyed by those who have received the Divine righteousness. Paul looks on this righteousness as the inheritance promised in the covenant that was concluded with Abraham. The heirs are Israel according to the promise, according to the spirit. But he prefers to substitute the notion of sonship, under which he comprehends free access to God the Father in prayer, the confidence that everything in God's world, everything that affects them in blessing or in chastisement, must serve His children, and the conviction that they are freed from the burden of the law as well as from bondage to the elements of the world (Rom. viii., Gal. iv.). And it is also one of their privileges that God's judgment of the world has no terrors for them. Their investiture with the Divine righteousness, simply because it is not a judicial transaction, is attended by the confident hope, to be realised only in the future, of ultimate acquittal at the day of judgment (Rom. v. 1 ff.).

When we consider the Divine revelation of righteousness as setting the sinner in a new position, which he, on his part, accepts by faith, the question is at once solved as to the relation which Paul conceived to exist between justification and moral regeneration. He had been reproached with encouraging men to sin by his doctrine of the abrogation of the law. And this caused him, in his letter to the Romans, to show how the appropriation of Christ's work was rather followed inevitably by, and furnished a true foundation for, their moral regeneration. The main thoughts in

this argument are, on the one hand, that the believer, as is indicated by the figure of submersion in baptism, is associated by faith with Christ in His crucifixion, and therefore shares in its result, the destruction of sin (Rom. vi. 3 ff.); and, in the second place, that the power of the Spirit became active on their behalf whenever the sentence passed upon the flesh was carried out upon the cross. Now if the justification of the sinner is looked upon exclusively as a judicial acquittal, we can only conclude that Paul set these two views side by side without tracing any connection between them; we would then have a double effect attributed to the work of Christ, no attempt being made to define more precisely the relation existing between its two aspects. For, certainly, where he describes the destruction of the power of sin, and the entrance of that of the spirit, he does not revert to justification. He does not derive the impulse and obligation to lead a holy life from the reception of justification by the believer, but attributes it directly to the annihilation of sin for him by the death of Christ. But the very fact that he does so must rather lead us to the conclusion that he has no thought of a double effect, but of one and the same effect of Christ's work. That the sinner has become just coincides absolutely with the fact that through Christ's death for love of men the old has passed away and become new. According to the Apostle's view of sin there can be no question of a bare removal of guilt. That is comprehended in the annihilation of the power of sin, along with which the power of the law is effaced. The fulness of grace and of the gifts of righteousness is thus revealed in the reign of its recipients in life through the one Christ (v. 17). In them righteousness is not a mere comfortable certainty, but a life-creating power (Rom. v. 21). A Divine revelation, it frees man from sin, and the deliverance includes acquittal, but it frees him also from all its bondage, and transfers him into its own service, the service of righteousness. It is the restoration of the living relation to God, from which sanctification follows of course (Rom. vi. 10). Hence, on the other hand, we may not speak of this conception of moral renewal as mystical, because it is founded on

the idea of dying with Christ, if we are not to confound it with the idea of the supernatural, the Divine revelation. Sanctification is neither more nor less mystical in that sense than justification.

The regeneration effected through dying with Christ is by no means a direct result ; it takes place rather through our perception of a fact (Rom. vi. 6). We must, that is, recognise that our old man is crucified with Christ, that the power of sin has come to an end. And because of the part played by our knowledge the will has also its task assigned to it, and there is no contradiction at all between the statements, 'sin is slain for us,' and 'we must first destroy it in ourselves.' Therefore the Apostle can also say absolutely : 'he who has died (with Christ) is justified from (acquitted of) sin.' The state of righteousness is deliverance from the power of sin. And the only condition is that this self-knowledge, by which we perceive that we are dead to sin and live to God in Christ Jesus (Rom. vi. 11), should be realised by our will, or, as Paul puts it in Rom. vii. 25, 'I serve God with my mind,' because my thought comes from the indwelling Spirit of God imparted through Christ. But this further involves the belief that the renewal has its seat in man's thought, *i.e.* in his spirit, while the body, as flesh, retains its original character. Paul, in Rom. viii. 10, says quite clearly on this point : 'Is Christ in you ? then the body is dead on account of sin, but the spirit is life on account of righteousness.' And here we must find our key to the interpretation of vii. 25, 'I myself with the mind serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.' The flesh retains its nature, but has lost its power. The opposition between his own impulses and those of the spirit still exists with its continuous conflict. But he 'who walks in the Spirit' has it in his power to leave his lusts unfulfilled (Gal. vi. 16), and to make his members instruments of righteousness for God ; 'sin will not reign over him' (Rom. vi. 13 f.) ; 'he has crucified the flesh with its passions and desires' (Gal. v. 24). But the end of the conflict lies in the future life, when 'He who raised Christ from the dead will give life to the mortal bodies of His own people, by means of His Spirit dwelling in them' (Rom.

viii. 11). To the faith of the Apostle the future seems so near that even the continuance of the conflict and of the resistance natural to the flesh loses its irksomeness. The rest of life he looks upon as a state of transition that will pass rapidly away. On the other hand, his ethical ideas derive both their strength and weakness from his conception of man's renewal. To it we owe his description of the glorious, all-reconciling, and truly creative power of the Spirit in love (1 Cor. xiii.). But it also suggests his ascetic and pessimistic view of the earthly life and its relationships (1 Cor. vii.). The ultimate solution, however, of the contradiction which satisfies the Apostle is indisputably to be found in his belief, 1 Cor. xv. (cf. Rom. v.) that the whole history of man must run its course in its sections, its two great orders, and that the essential character of the new is bound to supplant that of the old.

Paul knows nothing, therefore, of a restoration of the original condition of humanity. Adam never possessed the spirit. Redemption introduced a new nature into humanity in Christ. All that was given in previous history was a preparation by means of prophecy. The Divine message was confided to this sinful world, and its value was not lessened by the fact that the Jews were not in sympathy with the word intrusted to them (Rom. iii. 1 ff.). That was still the true word of God. And Paul admits (Rom. ix. 4) that this value which belonged to prophecy belonged also to everything held sacred by Israel. Why then was it that the people so highly honoured by being intrusted with this most precious privilege did not accept the gospel? Paul explains the problem in two ways. First he refers to the facts of the law. But in the second place he interprets the part taken by God in the light of his expectation that the present era was not final; that the planting of the gospel among the Gentiles would rather pave the way for the ultimate entrance of the Jews. For the present their opposition only served to bring the true nature of the gospel to light by contrasting it with legalism. But the ultimate reason for their conduct and experience was to be found in the evidence afforded by it that God by His own free choice brings to glory



those whom He will. Christ's redemption solved the problem of the long-continued passing over of sin (Rom. iii. 25). It was God's purpose to reveal His power and His judgment, but He also sought to make His mercy known, and He granted a respite to the world, because time was required for the rise of 'the vessels of mercy' (Rom. ix. 22). Everything takes place in obedience to the omnipotent will of God, but that will is realised in a sequence of events which overcomes opposing forces according to a certain law. This thought also governs Paul's conception of the future consummation. The resurrection of Christ was the starting-point. He had become King. And now He would subdue, one after the other, all hostile forces, until at last, having conquered death, He would deliver up His sovereignty to God. Then the absolute unity is consummated: 'God is all in all' (1 Cor. xv. 28).

#### § 17. *Conclusion.*

The Apostle's doctrine of salvation received its distinctive character from his own personal history, and as the latter had led him to break with Judaism, so his teaching was directly opposed to the Jewish doctrine of salvation by the law. But this was precisely the cause of its being thoroughly adapted to the Gentiles. Its central thought, that what was involved was an entirely new life, the deliverance of the spirit from the dominion of sense; the scope which it gave for a lofty view of all higher virtue; the principles of freedom and love:—all this not only impressed the gospel with a universally human character, but could not fail to produce a wonderful and overpowering effect in the world as it then was.

In the same way, when we reflect on the whole contents of this Pauline doctrine, the impression it gives of a powerful spiritual creation is irresistible. Its strength consists not merely in the skilful parries of attacks from the upholders of a narrow conception, not even merely in its wonderful psychology, but perhaps still more in the comprehensiveness of its thought. For his philo-

sophy apprehends everything in its salient features, and through all its variety of treatment and independence of traditional ideas and doctrines satisfies the reader by the unity of its far-reaching conceptions. In this sense the Apostle may be called the Creator of a Christian theology. For he has in fact considered and elucidated the history of the world and the human consciousness in all their aspects, from the point he has chosen as his centre, viz. the person and work of Christ. And yet his opponents were not perhaps wrong when they accused him of neither knowing nor understanding the Jesus of history. Without that gospel which, existing side by side with his, perpetuated the marvellous sayings of the actual Jesus, and immortalised His form in its human greatness and in its oneness with God, His preaching of the cross of the God-sent Christ, who destroyed the flesh and inaugurated the kingdom of the Spirit, would have been a doctrine for thinkers, a structure of ideas. But Paul himself was greater than his theory. In his application of his doctrine he was everywhere free; not the scholar and thinker, but the man of faith and action.

When we review the development of Christian theology in the period subsequent to Paul, we are astonished to find that only a part of his work was taken up and carried out. His doctrines of freedom from the law through its own dialectic, and of justification without the law, had been the main objects of all his efforts. For these he had contended with his masterly logic, and still more with every resource of Jewish subtilty. And yet it is just this part of his teaching that never returns, that doubtless maintained its ground only for a short time among his own immediate followers. It would be a great mistake, however, to deny on that account the success of this portion of his work. It succeeded in defeating on heathen soil the insinuations and demands of the Judaists, and in entirely robbing their attack of any power to perplex the Gentiles. The claim which they represented was deprived by it of its apparent foundation in the facts of history. It was not merely Paul, the Jew, who felt the necessity for his own sake of refuting from the law the validity of this claim. The

Gentile Christians especially required to have their confidence established by such a reply. The Judaistic demands were greatly assisted by the idea, universal among the heathens, that the religious traditions of antiquity were possessed of a peculiar dignity and authority. And the prejudice thus existing in their favour could only be overcome by a refutation based on the law and the Holy Scriptures themselves. Even though many might find the Apostle's proof hardly intelligible, yet its apparent certainty imposed upon them, and tended to destroy the power exerted over them by their awe of the past. In this sense it was the most effective and least dispensable weapon in the service of universalism. But the proof of its effectiveness is to be found in the fact that the apology was unnecessary in later times. And it is still more evident from the circumstance that post-apostolic Gentile Christians were able to appropriate the Pauline thought of a new spiritual life as a moral rule, a law of life, without at the same time reverting to the Jewish law. Indeed they could even make use of Moses' commandments without relapsing into Judaism, and without finding it necessary to erect barriers against it. And although the letter to the Hebrews resembles Paul's works most closely, yet it is sufficient to show that, when the Jews renewed their attack, it was defeated by other means.

## CHAPTER III

### PAUL AND THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH

#### § 1. *The Jerusalem Concordat.*

THE relation which existed between Paul and the Church in Jerusalem during the fourteen years that elapsed after his first visit could not well be preserved longer ; it is even surprising that it lasted as long as it did. The Christian Churches in Judæa existed as Jewish sects ; Paul constituted his Churches of Gentiles without binding them to observe the law. The former knew this, and praised God that he who had persecuted them was now proclaiming their faith. This involves at least their recognition of his work as an extension of the gospel. Their attitude is intelligible when we remember that even as Jews they were accustomed to many grades of proselytism, and regarded any form of it as a gain, because it was a step in the right direction. But when this type of Christianity not only spread, but at the same time assumed a fixed form, and gave rise to a Church side by side with their own, explanations became almost inevitable between the two parties. We ought not to begin by looking upon these as the result of an actual opposition, or an attempt at arbitration between two hostile parties. If their previous relations had been of such a nature, the Apostle could not have spoken as he has done about the fourteen years of peace. We have therefore yet to discover from the further course of the narrative, whether at last opposition to his procedure rose on the side of the Jewish Christians and compelled negotiation. Speaking quite generally, however, the

actual circumstances rather support the view that the great opposition known to history did not precede, but arose out of the conference; that it was the starting-point, or, at least, marked the rise to power among the Jewish Christians of the Judaism, which consisted in the one-sided tendency that opposed Gentile Christianity with its freedom from the law. However that may be, we are on the threshold of events of the first importance, of a transaction necessarily decisive for the whole further extension of the Christian faith, and the character of the Church. Whether Gentile Christianity was permissible is identical with the question whether the Christian Church was to be universal.

The importance of the event was already recognised in antiquity, as is shown by the fact that the conference which, according to Acts vi. 15, took place in Jerusalem was regarded as the Apostolic Council, and the forerunner of the general synods of the Church. This view is however unsatisfactory on the face of it. For we learn from Paul (Gal. ii. 11 ff.) that the conference in Jerusalem was followed by an after conference in Antioch, whose consequences were hardly less important, if not for the whole of the future, at least for the course of events in the next period. We must therefore, at any rate, take the two together, if we would do justice to what actually took place. And when we follow Paul's account, the growing excitement with which he unmistakeably records the event at Antioch is sufficient to prove that, in his view, it was there that the crisis was reached.

Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians, because the attempt was being made to lead the Churches founded by him to accept circumcision, and with it the obligation to fulfil the whole law, as a necessary consequence of their faith in Christ (Gal. v. 1 ff.). The originators of the movement had attacked the gospel which he preached to the Gentiles, and had also impugned his warrant for it and apostolic authority. These two, his gospel and his authority, were in his eyes inseparable. He even felt himself justified in pronouncing a curse upon the introduction of a gospel different from his own (i. 6-9), being thoroughly convinced that the latter



was not of human origin, but wholly due to the revelation of Jesus Christ Himself. And, before entering into the main question, he begins in the letter by vindicating the Divine origin of his gospel. His proof consists, in the first place, in the fact that he himself was only changed from a persecutor into an apostle by the revelation, and that it had been intended to make him the Apostle to the Gentiles (ver. 13-16). But this is followed by further evidence. He reviews historically his own action and the success that had attended it; showing, on the one hand, that he had depended solely and entirely on the revelation, thus maintaining his complete independence, and, on the other, that his independence had been justified by the success of his mission, as well as by the attitude towards it of the early Apostles and primitive Church. The latter point is established, partly because they had been unable to refuse him their recognition, and partly because the opposition had remained futile. The argument falls into three divisions: First, he shows how for seventeen years after his conversion he had lived and wrought quite independently of the primitive Church, and yet that his success had obtained its recognition (i. 16-24). Secondly, he tells the story of the conference held in Jerusalem to discuss his labours (ii. 1-10). And thirdly, he describes the collision at Antioch (ii. 11 ff.). Both events contribute to his evidence; for in Jerusalem he had indeed been attacked, but unsuccessfully; while in Antioch, at least, he had maintained his claim triumphantly.

## § 2. *Paul's Journey to Jerusalem.*

We have now first to ask, What led up to the conference in Jerusalem? Paul's narrative gives no direct answer to the question, except that he acted on a revelation, and laid the gospel which he was preaching to the Gentiles before the Church, and especially the heads of the Church, in Jerusalem, 'lest by any means he should run or have run in vain.' Accordingly his intention was to come to an understanding with them about his gospel. His

resolve was the result of a revelation. This does not negative his having thought of it earlier. But it had only matured when he became convinced that it was the will of God. The motive, however, which in the main decided him, was his anxiety lest all his previous labours should come to nothing. Now his fears cannot have referred to his mission or its success. Of his mission he was and continued to be absolutely certain, and its success was an actual fact. The direct result of his work cannot therefore have aroused his anxiety, we must look for some other cause, and this is only to be found in the fate, the recognition, of his mission in Jerusalem. His solicitude is thoroughly explained if we suppose that, with all his freedom of thought and independence in action, he never lost sight of the hope of joining in the erection of one great Catholic Church of Christ. From this we do not learn whether anything had occurred to rouse his anxiety; and there is nothing in itself impossible in the supposition that it may have arisen, and eventually led him to procure an understanding at headquarters, without any external cause. And in support of such a conjecture we have the fact that his resolve was due to a revelation, *i.e.* was formed in a moment of sudden conviction. But this does not decide the question. All that we are entitled to infer from it is that if an external cause did exist, it was not in itself so urgent as absolutely to compel Paul to take the step he did.

Now the account that follows of what took place in Jerusalem undoubtedly gives us a further clew, and it is of a kind to make absolutely certain the existence of such an external cause. It mentions 'false brethren privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage' (ii. 4). We may in the meantime leave it undecided where this 'stealthy entrance' is to be located, whether in Jerusalem, or in the sphere of Paul's labours, and therefore, say, in Antioch. The effect is the same in either case. In any event the Jewish Churches had ceased to praise God unanimously for what they heard of Paul's efforts. On the contrary, there were now men in their midst who set out to disturb and

undermine his work. Their opposition was not merely an attack upon Paul's personal independence, an attempt to make him subordinate to themselves; the freedom which 'they spied out' was the freedom to which the Gentile Christians were called (Gal. v. 1); and 'the reduction to bondage,' at which they aimed, referred to the bondage of the law (iv. 1, 7, 24 ff., v. 1). If this took place in Antioch, still the case had now to be decided in Jerusalem. But if the movement was confined to Jerusalem, then it threatened Paul's career from that point. In any case we have here the cause that led to Paul's action.

Now the demand made by this party is at once obvious from what follows. It was indeed high time for Paul to act as he now did. Nor was he the man to do anything by halves. Therefore he did not go alone. He took with him, not only his fellow-labourer Barnabas, who, having come from the Church in Jerusalem, was fitted to act as mediator between the parties, but he also brought Titus, one of his Greek converts, to present him to the heads of the Church. This trusted disciple appeared as a living witness to the Gentile Christianity instituted by Paul; but his presence in Jerusalem was also a kind of challenge. It could not but force a definite reply to the question whether a Gentile Christian was to be received as an associate, and at once compel opponents openly to show their colours. The next sentence in Paul's narrative tells us that this actually happened. 'But not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised.' So far as the words go, this may mean either that no attempt was made to compel him, or that the attempt was made and failed. The latter meaning, however, is rendered probable by the similar words (ii. 14): 'How canst thou compel the Gentiles to live like the Jews?' He only denies that they had succeeded, not that they had made the attempt, as is perfectly clear from the fact that he had to resist them, and resist them resolutely (ii. 4). Nay, what sort of significance would the conference have had at all, if there had been no one there who demanded, and attempted to secure, the circumcision of the Gentiles? The narrative is designed through-

out to apply to current events in Galatia, and the importance of the conference for its object lies in the circumstance that the demand now made upon the Galatian Christians had been indeed brought forward, but had not succeeded in the capital of Jewish Christianity itself. The words then unmistakably imply that the proposal was made, but that its supporters did not succeed in carrying it.

Now this was the first result of his journey. But a second immediately followed. The heads of the primitive Church, the *δοκοῦντες εἶναι τι*, the highly esteemed authorities, added nothing to his, Paul's, statement. They declared themselves contented with it. If they had had anything to say, it could only have been a criticism of his conduct. The meaning is therefore that they were unable to make any demand upon him. And not only so, but these very men, James, Cephas, and John, did more. They recognised his Divine mission to the Gentiles. They entered into a solemn covenant of fellowship with him and Barnabas, and at the same time concluded a treaty with them concerning their respective spheres of action. The one single condition laid upon him neither limited nor burdened his work or principles in the slightest degree. This was the triumph of his cause; thus it was now publicly recognised. And this recognition was all the more important, through the fact that it had not been attained easily and unopposed. Objections had been raised, a demand had been made: Titus was to submit to circumcision; the Gentile was to become a Jew in order to be a Christian: Paul's whole procedure had been attacked in its very first principles.

### § 3. *The Assembly of the Church.*

Though these results are clearly stated by Paul as the outstanding points in the negotiations at Jerusalem, yet they do not at all sufficiently inform us of the course of the discussions, or the attitude of the separate parties or individuals that took part in them. Indeed, had we not been expressly told that a demand was

made for Titus's circumcision, and that a party existed which sought, in the interests of the law, to destroy the liberty of the Gentile Christians, then Paul's success in obtaining the approval of his conduct, and especially its recognition from the primitive Apostles, would have ended our inquiry. With this, and, of course, his obtaining at the close their sanction to his mission-work in a formal treaty, we must have rested content. But the certainty that quite other proposals were made is enough to indicate that matters were more complicated. Besides, we learn at the very outset that Paul, when he came to Jerusalem, did not merely lay his case before the brethren, but had also a private conference for the same object with the heads of the Church. In the rest of his account of these proceedings this statement is without any sequel, in so far as he has not formally distinguished between the parts played by the two meetings. Any such distinction we must introduce for ourselves. What we have in his condensed and continuous description is a synopsis of the concrete results, the writer's main purpose being to set before his readers what was calculated to influence them in their actual circumstances. Jewish zealots were demanding the circumcision of the Galatian Gentile Christians: precisely such zealots had made the same demand at the earlier date in Jerusalem. The authority of the early Apostles was urged against Paul in Galatia. The same authority had confronted him in Jerusalem. How greatly both these forms of opposition weighed upon his mind is shown by the excited description he gives of them, twice causing him to complete his sentence in a way not intended when he began it (vers. 4 and 6). His excitement is to be explained, however, by the fact that thoughts of the present continually cross his narrative of the past. Therefore he is concerned now to show how both of these parties acted in Jerusalem, and how he himself met them; and thus we obtain the means of dividing his account. And when we succeed in doing so, we see again the groups in Jerusalem, so important for our appreciation of the course of events there.

Of these groups, the one, that of the early Apostles, is familiar



enough from the earlier history of the Church. Paul designates them the recognised authorities, οἱ δοκοῦντες, or δοκοῦντες εἶναί τι, and δοκοῦντες στῦλοι εἶναι (ii. 2, 6, 9). And since he mentions (ii. 9) James, Cephas, and John, we at once infer that we are in presence of the same inner circle designated (i. 17, 19) 'the older Apostles,' and briefly 'the Apostles.' The source of their authority is described (ii. 6) in the words: 'Whatsoever they once were, it maketh no matter to me.' The reverence paid them was founded on the past, and referred, no doubt, to their personal relations with Jesus. We need not suppose that by these authorities the 'pillars' are alone meant. Perhaps this designation is meant to convey a special distinction over and above the reverence due to the early Apostles as a whole. But, even apart from this, it is probable that they were not the only men who enjoyed this esteem in Jerusalem,—that it was rather a larger circle with whom Paul (ii. 2) had a special conference.

But as regards the other group of which Paul (ii. 4 f.) speaks, we are entirely ignorant of the individuals who composed it, and this is the first time that we meet with them in the history of the early Church. But to the early Church we must suppose them to have belonged, even if what we are here told of them took place, not in Jerusalem, but in the sphere of the Pauline mission. For they must, in that case, have come from Jerusalem, and have thence brought dissension into the Gentile Christian mission-field. We have however convincing evidence that Paul is speaking exclusively of events which took place in Jerusalem. Even the connection with what precedes points to this. The fact here briefly stated, that not even Titus was compelled to submit to circumcision, requires to be explained or supplemented. By itself it is hardly intelligible, since up to this point we have not been told of anything that could give rise to such a demand. The Apostle therefore continues: 'because of the false brethren, privily brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage: to whom we gave place in the way of subjection, no, not for an hour,

that the truth of the gospel might continue with you.' Syntactically, indeed, these words do not form an explanation of the previous sentence; they stand side by side with it as containing new matter. That the attempt to circumcise Titus was unsuccessful is stated in all its importance as an independent fact. Paul only means to add a statement of the position of the oppressors, and of his attitude towards them. That is a matter by itself. And yet it contains the explanation of what precedes, because it is only from this further narrative that we obtain light on the conference held regarding the question of circumcision. Now there can be no doubt that Paul's words as to his own resistance to the proposal must refer to Jerusalem. There was no question of his yielding in the sphere of his mission to such attacks or demands. His firmness there was clearly enough recognised. What alone carried conviction was his having maintained his principles even in Jerusalem, his steadfastness at the fateful moment (*οὐδὲ πρὸς ὥραν*), and only of this could he say that it involved the preservation of the truth of the gospel for the Gentile Christians.

The case is somewhat different with his mention of the false brethren themselves, who came in stealthily, in order to spy out and undermine the freedom of his mission. But we are still led to look merely to events in Jerusalem. The whole passage about his resistance would have lost its point if he had had any earlier dealings with these people. The significance of the crisis lay just in the fact that he encountered them now, and had to maintain his freedom, that is, the freedom of his gospel against them, for the first time. It was here therefore, and here first of all, that they faced him, and revealed their intentions. But then we must apply to the community in Jerusalem what he says of their 'coming in.' He regards them as intruders into the Church, false brethren who attached themselves to it. And this throws a new light on the history of the early Church itself, of which, since the persecution under Agrippa I., we know little or nothing. For it implies that the Church had been increased by the admission of zealots for the law, who formed a new element in its membership.

Paul calls them absolutely, 'false brethren.' He describes them in a manner which reminds us vividly of his characterisation of the false apostles with whom he had to deal later on in Corinth (2 Cor. xi. 13-15). According to his conception, they had no real interest in Christianity. Members of the Church and brethren they had become. But to him they were only false brethren, lying brethren. He had absolutely no doubt that their only aim in entering the Church was a sinister one. They desired to counteract his gospel, to suppress the 'gospel of the Gentiles,' with the primitive Church as the base of operations. We need not decide how far he was right in imputing this intention. But, apart from this, we have the fact that the men of this party had only just joined the Church. It is impossible that they can have belonged to it at any time during the period in which the Jewish Churches looked with satisfaction on Paul's work in Syria and Cilicia. And it is also a fact that they joined with the fixed intention never, even as Christians, to abandon any part of the law. The character of the early Church was thus altered. We may perhaps explain this additional element by supposing that, at a time when the excitement of the people was rising, and heralding the war for national liberty, patriots zealous for the law sought to recruit from the Christian Church for their own cause. Here all is merely conjectural. But the change in Jerusalem explains Paul's resolve to go there and precipitate a decision.

When we assume that this party existed and exercised its influence in Jerusalem, the events themselves are seen in their true light. It is pretty clear that the circumcision of Titus was not the only demand made. 'Not even Titus,' says Paul. The demand plainly went further; it amounted to a claim that the Gentiles in general should be circumcised. That was the answer of the party to Paul's case. But the minimum was that at least the heathen whom he had introduced into their Church should submit to circumcision, in order to remove, for their own sake, and for that of all their Jewish neighbours, the scandal that would otherwise be caused by their intercourse with him. Paul and his

companions rejected unconditionally this proposal also. In this matter yielding or compromise was wholly impossible, especially in face of these, the ringleaders of the opposition. 'On their account,' he begins what he has to say of them in a sentence which he completes with a different reference. Precisely on their account, he no doubt was going to say, he must stand absolutely firm; not as if, apart from this, he could have yielded, but their views and intentions clearly revealed why no agreement was conceivable. It is perfectly certain that the early Apostles did not support the general demand made by the party. We know this from the fact that they had nothing to add to Paul's explanation, no proposal to make in regard to it. But it cannot be affirmed so absolutely that they also opposed the request that at least Titus should be circumcised. It is worth noticing that Paul speaks only of his own and Barnabas's resistance. And when we reflect that here the discussion was about an imminent offence, and perhaps a matter that might endanger their external relations, there is nothing to preclude the belief that they may have advised yielding in this instance. This is all we can discover about it. But, if it was so, then we could most readily understand the abrupt aside in which Paul declares that he is 'indifferent to their reputation, since God accepteth not man's person' (ii. 6).

#### § 4. *The Treaty with the Early Apostles.*

The results of the conference held by the Church, therefore, were that, by the express authority of the Apostles, no condition was imposed on Paul in reference to his procedure as a missionary, and that, further, owing to the determined resistance of Paul and his companions, not even the special demand for Titus's circumcision succeeded. We cannot indeed say that this involved a thorough-going recognition of the Gentile Christians on the part of the Church. The influence of the legalists may have been so strong that neither Paul himself, nor the early Apostles—even supposing the latter had desired it—were in a position to accomplish this. But the attack had been warded off, and that was at

any rate a satisfactory result. It secured the Gentile Christians from being openly rejected by the Judaists. More it certainly did not effect. But still the former condition had been restored, the toleration which might, in course of time, develop into a real union. Now, that the result of the negotiation in the Church did not in point of fact go any further than this appears from what next ensued. Paul and Barnabas concluded another and more comprehensive agreement with the Apostles themselves, but undoubtedly with them alone. There is no word of the community having had any share in it. On the contrary, everything goes to show that the arrangement, of which we are told by Paul in ii. 7, was the result of the private interview he had with the Apostles, and more particularly with their leaders.

The interview of Paul with the Apostles led to a formal treaty between James, Cephas, and John on the one side, and Paul and Barnabas on the other. The former then gave the latter the right hand of fellowship, and arranged that they should go to the Gentiles, while they themselves were to be the Apostles to the circumcised. Only, Paul and his companion were to remember the poor, *i.e.* the poor of Jerusalem. It was the success of Paul's labours that induced the primitive Apostles to frame this agreement. That they recognised as evidence of a Divine commission, and of a grace granted him for his work. These were the grounds which Paul himself had put before them. It was his idea that he should be intrusted with the gospel to the heathen, as Peter with that to the circumcised. The words, 'he who wrought in Peter for the gospel of the circumcised wrought also in me for the Gentiles,' are his own words inserted from memory. Since the Apostles had accepted the proof he had drawn from the facts, they could resolve to give him and Barnabas their hands as the sign of fellowship. And this fellowship, *κοινωνία*, cf. 2 Cor. ix. 13, was not a mere personal recognition. It did not simply express a partnership formed for an immediate object, but a recognition of their union in faith and religion. In spite of this, it was subject to a certain restriction; for it applied in the first place only to



their mission work, and for this the division into distinct spheres was stereotyped. But the division was neither meant to distinguish work abroad from work at home, nor merely, irrespective of locality, work among the Jews from that among the Gentiles, but it also referred to their practice. Each party was to promote its own special gospel, the one that adapted to the uncircumcised, the other that meant for the circumcised, as it had done hitherto. In other words, the treaty did not provide that the primitive Apostles might henceforth also proclaim the gospel without law. Paul at the time did not demand this of them. All that he desired was the full recognition of his freedom on his own ground. And to obtain this he made no difficulty about leaving them to follow their own course, or about recognising it for his part. The treaty was, in the first place, a mission treaty. And if it implied the recognition of the Pauline mission to the Gentiles, yet it must not be overlooked that the opposite procedure was as clearly recognised, that therefore the observance of the law among the Jews was confirmed.

Still, the result of this treaty was much more important than that of the Church conference. The end of the latter was merely the dropping of the demand that the Gentiles should be circumcised. The treaty expressly justified the procedure of the Pauline mission. Nevertheless, important as it was, it did not contain the ultimate and complete solution of the question. The separation of the spheres remained. It cannot be said that by it the Gentile Christians were merely put in a position similar to that of Jewish proselytes, the *σεβόμενοι τὸν Θεόν*. The distinctive feature, indeed, of the arrangement was that every fixed stipulation of this sort was avoided. Paul could not have agreed to such a thing. The possibility of a settlement, which yet left so much over to the future, may be explained if we bear in mind the expectation that the return of the Lord would quickly put everything to rights. But its execution was calculated to discover new difficulties daily. As long as the mission fields were kept apart, no fault could be found with it. Whenever they came in contact with each other

fresh complications were bound to emerge. The zealots for the law were constantly tempted to resume the conflict, and the final condition, which required assistance to be given to the poor in Jerusalem, is enough to show that this had not been left out of sight in the interviews. For it contained a means of conciliating, or at least of checkmating, the opposing elements in the Church. To this may have been added the hope that the bond of love would in time bring about a victorious recognition of complete fellowship in the faith.

Admitting all this, the agreement was a fact of the highest importance and of far-reaching influence. In this same letter to the Galatians Paul is able, not without reason, to refer to it as the triumph of his liberty before the tribunal of the early Apostles, the attestation of his gospel as a Divine revelation. He had put the crucial question before Peter and the rest, and the answer given by them corresponded to its importance, and was of such a nature as necessarily to exercise the greatest effect on their own consciousness, and at once to alter their position. The *κοινωνία* which they now entered into with the Gentile Apostles on their procedure being recognised, was the beginning of the great Christian Church. Till then, their Church had been an organisation existing within the pale of Judaism. There had been believing and unbelieving Jews, but all had been Jews. But now, as a result of the mission recognised by them to have received its warrant from God, there were believing Jews and believing Gentiles. As a necessary consequence, the faith in which they were at one became the higher unity, and belief in Christ could not but develop into an independent religion. In this we have the era-making significance of the treaty. It was the crucial moment, when these men were compelled to see in the facts brought before them the power and grace of God. And, however much they left to be executed or thought out in the future, their decision was still a moral fact, in which the inmost spirit of Christianity was revealed. And although shortly afterwards they were unable to retain the standpoint they had reached,

although their attitude was vacillating, yet even this fact could not weaken the significance of the crisis, nor lessen the greatness of their decision. On the contrary, the event showed how strong had been the bonds from which they had been called upon to free themselves.

§ 5. *The Dispute in Antioch.*

Paul's narrative in Galatians does not end with the treaty of Jerusalem. He goes on without a break to tell what took place in Antioch (ii. 11 f.). And not till he has finished this incident does the history of his relations with the primitive Apostles conclude. It is probable that this event had also been brought up against him in Galatia. Here was an instance in which it was possible to show that he was not at one with the early Apostles, but had to bow like the rest to their authority; that his position was therefore isolated and unwarranted. On the other hand, though Paul now takes up the matter, he cannot of course prove once more that he had extorted, or retained the sanction of the primitive Apostles. What he does maintain is, that he had vindicated the claims of his gospel, and had convicted even Peter of error.

From Paul's narrative we see that, at the date of the Jerusalem treaty, there existed in Antioch a church which had been founded by him, and contained Jews as well as Gentiles. Both parties lived in the closest intercourse and joined at the common table. No sort of Jewish observance was imposed on the Gentiles. The Jews, similarly, neither held by the legal ordinances about food, nor troubled themselves about the numerous defilements to which this intercourse exposed them. Paul and Barnabas, born Jews themselves, set the example, and the others imitated them. Here already, therefore, was actually realised the sequel of their fellowship in the faith, a consequence which, so far as we see, had been left untouched by the treaty. In other words, the liberty of the Gentile Christians from the law exerted its reflex influence upon the Jews, where the former were united with them in one com-

munity. Now, soon after the agreement in Jerusalem Cephas travelled to Antioch. And when it is added that in a short time deputies followed him from James, we have every reason to suppose that he set out on his journey with the intention of informing himself as to the state of matters existing in this Church founded by Paul, and of acting further as he might see cause. Still, Peter came without any hostile views; and although not certain beforehand of the position he was to adopt, yet what he saw in Antioch captivated him; he cast aside his scruples, and ate also along with the Gentiles. But this had not lasted long when other brethren were commissioned and sent from Jerusalem by James. It may be that news had reached the capital of Peter's conduct, or that the leaders had simply received more accurate information about the general state of matters in Antioch. The delegates not only themselves refrained from intercourse with the Gentiles, but they adopted so hostile an attitude, that Peter, intimidated, withdrew until the Gentiles should submit to the Jewish law. Then the rest of the Jews also seceded, and even Barnabas was carried along with them. The schism was complete. At the time Paul himself was absent. When he returned, his followers complained bitterly of what had taken place, and especially of Peter's part in it. He at once called a meeting of the whole Church, and publicly accused Peter. It was to him he first turned, and not to the deputies. To gain Peter was to win his case, and he could hope to influence him alone. But, further, it was especially to him he could bring home the wrong, and the inconsistency of the course that had been followed.

#### § 6. *Paul and Peter.*

Paul in his narrative calls Peter's conduct hypocritical. For it had sprung from fear 'of those of the circumcision,' *i.e.* the Jerusalemites, and thus it could no longer be the result of genuine conviction. His speech to Peter he reports in broad lines from memory, and he uses it also to introduce the direct discussion of

the question which, when he wrote, was before the Galatian Church, as it had formerly been before him in Antioch. He reproaches Peter with the inconsistency between his words and actions. 'If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of the Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?' Peter had himself formerly given up what he now demanded of the Gentiles. His action in these instances was the inconsistency by which Paul held him. It was the corner in which he pinned him, in order publicly to reprimand him. The argument that follows, a noble specimen of Paul's dialectic, takes the form of an exposition of the whole results of the reception of the Gospel, of the faith in Christ. This faith is simply the willing to be justified through Christ. He who seeks this confesses that he cannot be justified by anything else, therefore not by the works of the law. That is the kernel of the speech.

We can only understand the speech fully, however, if we fix our attention on the actual facts. It is not a statement of doctrine, resting on general propositions and proof-texts. It starts from experience. Yet it is not limited to the particular moment, but affords us a singularly clear insight into the deepest experiences and motives of the two great Apostles. It is possible, therefore, to discover from Paul's words what must have passed long before between them, what from their first meeting had been their common ground, forming an alliance that might for a time be disturbed, but could not be destroyed. Paul was a Jew by birth as well as Peter. Both were inalienably proud of belonging to the people that possessed the sonship and promises of God, and they therefore felt themselves widely separated from the Gentiles, who were contrasted with them, also inalienably, as sinners. But in spite of this, nay, just because they were Jews, to whom, as such, must first come the knowledge of God's ways, they had seen that their law did not lead them by its works to justification before God, that to this there was rather only one way, the way of faith in Christ. Therefore they had trodden this path, and thus in them the scripture was fulfilled, that 'what is called flesh is not



justified' by the works of the law. But this vital resolve had now indeed led them in the eyes of other men to a strange result. While they only sought in Christ what the Jew was directed to look for from his descent, *i.e.* to become just before their God, they were classed with the Gentiles as sinners, since they ranked themselves with them on the way of salvation. Of course there is a blank which Paul has not expressly supplied. It was not necessary for him to repeat what he had already said. The omitted link is simply the 'living like the Gentiles,' to which Peter had made up his mind. Paul had long taken this step. He had drawn the consequence. If legal works had been unable to justify him, he was no longer, after finding another kind of justification, bound to observe them. But Peter also had just been acting in accordance with this truth. He had broken through the barriers of Judaism, and had begun to live with the Gentiles as they lived, free from the law of meats and purification. Yet after going a little way he had been staggered by the remonstrances of men whose conception of their religion was narrow, and less logical, who, though sharing in the faith in Christ, could not rid themselves of the belief that the barriers formed by the law alone divided man from the world of sinners, but felt as if, apart from these, they had lost their footing. According to this view, therefore, Paul, Peter, and Barnabas, and the other Jews who held with them, were renegades, and had cast away the sacred inheritance; they had become Gentiles, and therefore 'were adjudged sinners.' In their sense, therefore, Paul put the question which in its very form bore its own refutation, 'Is Christ then the minister of sin?' Up to this point he had been addressing Peter. But on taking up this reproach of his opponents, he had to turn also to them, and it was with them he now argued. With his 'God forbid' he repelled the suggestion; but he at once converted the defence into an attack, retorting vigorously in his own peculiar way; his opponents' treacherous supposition was turned into a reproach against themselves. The sinner was what he was through transgression. But what had they now trans-

gressed? Nothing that still existed for them. The law they had destroyed, since they had to abandon their belief in its power to justify them; for that was certainly the reason why they had become Christians. It was only possible therefore to speak of transgression if this step was retraced, if they first acted inconsistently with the gospel, and re-erected the law. But he who did so was not really a transgressor. He only assumed the position of one. If that was true of Peter and his companions, in whose retrograde action the inconsistency was quite patent, yet it was also true universally. It affected also the opposition, provided that they also had come to faith in Christ, from the knowledge that the law by itself did not help them. What appeared to them unflinching fidelity was only a relapse. Their action was not conservative, but destructive. In order to show them this in its full extent Paul now referred to his own life. He described how the law set in faith in Christ in his own experience, according to his own knowledge, and he at the same time described for them what their own feelings must have been in the days when their faith was most earnest. He had died to the law, and the stroke that severed his connection with it could only be compared with death. To it the law itself had brought him, and only by this death had he attained life for God. But the life and death alike had been effected through Christ; since the Christian repeated in his own experience what took place in the crucifixion. He was crucified with Christ in order to live through Him, and this life was already a reality, although he still lived in the flesh. For life in the flesh was, at the same time, a life in faith. Any other view of life meant for him 'frustrating the grace of God.' The death of Christ would be meaningless to him, if the law still provided a way to righteousness.

If any credit is to be given to Paul's statements, it is impossible to close our eyes to the fact that he here uses very different language to the Jews from that which he employed in Jerusalem. There he had guarded the validity of his mission to the Gentiles, defending himself against the demand that the

Gentiles were to submit to the law. Here he himself makes a demand upon the Jews; neither more nor less than that, because they believe in Christ, they should give up the obligation to observe the law. Paul in this did not act from caprice. He did not, *e.g.*, of his own accord use his first success to carry on a further contest, nor was he merely impelled by the crisis to adopt a violent course. His action was a necessity. The question hitherto kept in the background forced itself forward, it had become inevitable. Nor was Peter any more to blame for the matter being pushed so far. It was not caprice on his part that led him in Antioch to break through the barriers of the law, and to live as a Gentile with Gentiles. He had only confirmed the union to which he had admitted Paul when he gave him his hand, and he had confirmed it nobly. Somewhere and somehow the inference had to be drawn, when Jews and Gentiles met, and if they met on the very ground of Gentile Christianity. What Peter had done was the result of the first steps taken in Jerusalem; it was the power implicit in the thought become explicit in fact. What Paul now did was simply to reveal this connection, this inner necessity. Here the whole force of that fact that already belonged to his past was for the first time revealed. He could not have acted otherwise without exposing his whole work to a fatal shock. In truth a compromise was wholly impossible. It could not but be shattered on the partition wall of Judaism, as soon as this was erected. It was now necessary for Paul to be inexorable. The treaty had lost its meaning. Like a storm the gospel of Paul laid it low; like a storm it swept over its halves. The day in Antioch takes us beyond the day of Jerusalem.

But it was the treaty of Jerusalem itself which had led to the collision. In other words, its weakness could not but show itself, as soon as the representatives of the Church of Jerusalem entered into personal relations, not only with the Apostles of the Gentiles, but with the Gentile Christian Churches. For then the moment had come when it must be decided whether the *κοινωνία*, the brotherhood permitted to their Apostles, would be extended to the con-

verted heathens themselves. If the conditions contemplated by the treaty were maintained, then the separation would be preserved in their lives, the one would live as a Jew, the other as a Gentile. But otherwise one of the two parties must advance, and give up its mode of life. Now Peter had done this, but he had not been able to persevere. He had suffered himself to be overcome by the emissaries from Jerusalem, and now he formed with them a party which coerced the Gentile Christians. Paul regarded this not only as defection, but as hypocrisy, as acting against his better knowledge. He was not entitled to do so merely on account of the logical inconsistency in which Peter was involved by his vacillation. He must have had a right to reproach him in this way, a right resting on the communications that had formerly passed between them. There is one article, at least, in Paul's indictment that cannot have been merely a new demand. It must rather have been an appeal to Peter's own declaration. He had also recognised, it is said, that legal works did not help him to be righteous before God; he believed in Christ for this very reason, or, at any rate, understood faith in Him in this sense. This gives us a definite clew for our estimate of Peter's personal position in the question before us; indeed, it points directly to the nature of his Christianity at the time. Paul's conception proves that we may undoubtedly draw deeper conclusions from Peter's initial appearance in Antioch. He had unquestionably up to this time clung to the binding force of the law upon him. Therefore his sudden acquiescence in the conditions existing there is at least striking, and is not satisfactorily explained by supposing that the more novel impressions experienced by him in Antioch had overpowered him, or that he had felt himself in the position of the Church's guest. The fact therefore is sufficient to suggest that his conviction of the necessity of the law had already been secretly shaken. And the suggestion becomes a certainty from the manner in which Paul treated him. Only, of course, when we consider his sudden recoil, we cannot look upon him as agreeing with Paul from fully matured conviction. His relapse is not to be ascribed

to want of character, but to the conflict between the dawning sense of liberty and the inner bondage. He balanced himself on the slender line of the Jerusalem treaty, and his experience was identical with the fate of the treaty itself. But to do him full justice, we must consider the meaning attached to the crisis by the men under whose influence he relapsed. Thus alone is a full light thrown on what took place in his mind.

§ 7. *James.*

It was indisputably James from whom the protest came; the same whom Paul names first in his enumeration of the pillars, who united with him in Jerusalem, he who to all appearance then occupied a unique position at the very head of the community. We have absolutely no reason to suppose that, when he intervened in Antioch, he had the slightest intention of resiling from the treaty in Jerusalem. But the treaty, as he conceived it, required that the Jews, for whom their separate mission continued to exist, were bound to adhere to the law. It did not even prevent his belief that the union of law and gospel was the true Christianity, which gave its only support even to the Gentile mission. That was the reason why Jews were not to eat with Gentiles. It was not a question of free customs, of social behaviour, of piety in the wider sense, but of the obligation to observe the law. No Jew could think of any other point of view. And it is clearly in this sense that Paul took up the question in his reply. It was not to secure an adjustment agreeable to all, and to draw up conditions with this object, that James sent emissaries to Antioch. It was to keep the Jews to their duty. Paul had admittedly drawn the inference that for him who would be just by faith in Christ this obligation had passed away. But the early Church had not yet done so, and James held firmly to its tradition. Therefore, also, it certainly was not secondary motives, or momentary impressions, that swayed Peter hither and thither, but a painful division in his mind, brought to light by the external situation. He also had



shared the faith of the primitive Church. He was at the point of breaking through the barrier, but his decision was not fully made. Peter as certainly moved under the pressure of grave conscientious difficulties, as James was far from being a mere wanton disturber of peace.

Paul does not tell us the issue of the conflict in Antioch. The report of the speech delivered by him there has almost changed for him into an address to the Galatian Churches. He passes from it immediately into a refutation of their errors. Yet we can hardly entertain any doubt as to the extent of his success in Antioch. If Peter had yielded there, if therefore the matter had been adjusted in the direction of Pauline principles, Paul could not have failed to mention it in the Galatian letter. He has recorded with a perfect sense of his triumph the recognition he had obtained in Jerusalem of the rights of his Gentile mission; and he could not have here failed to relate a corresponding triumph in Antioch, where the greater principle was at stake. The aim of his letter demanded as much. But he has nothing to report, except the words in which he proved his spiritual superiority, the convincing power of his thought. Of actual success there is nothing. We cannot doubt, therefore, that at the time the schism was left unhealed. This result, also, alone explains the fact that Paul, in spite of the significant concession granted to him by the Jerusalem authorities, yet speaks of them in his narrative of the events there with a certain reserve, and, indeed, roughly refuses any recognition of their dignity. He has also, besides, in writing his letter to the Galatians, chiefly to prove his independence of them. And in that case we have further evidence of the result we have indicated. It had strengthened the fanatics, and weakened the influence of the leaders in Jerusalem. The former felt themselves more than ever free to go their own way, to maintain their hostility, and to intrude with pernicious effect into the sphere of Paul's labours. The fateful collision in Antioch afforded the unhallowed starting-point for their attacks. On the other hand, it explains why from this time Paul

makes no further mention of Syria, the scene of his earlier activity.

The picture thus obtained of the events in Jerusalem and Antioch is perfectly self-consistent. The early Church had remained Jewish, but it had regarded Paul's Gentile mission from a distance with approval, until the zeal of more recent members for the law demanded interference in its affairs. Then Paul resolved to make the attempt to procure a favourable decision in Jerusalem. He succeeded in the main points. The authorities of the primitive Church, without declaring themselves for this Gentile Christianity which had thrown off the law, desired to put no obstacle in the way of his activity, and proposals to circumcise the Gentile Christians, or at any rate Titus, whom Paul had introduced to them, were rejected. The leaders concluded, at least in their own name, a treaty with Paul, in terms of which he was to carry on his work, according to his own principles, among the Gentiles, just as they were to do, according to theirs, among the Jews. In spite of the difference in their several paths, they solemnly allied themselves with him in the brotherhood of the faith. The Gentile Christians were to contribute of their charity, and by this means their connection with the primitive Church was to be proved and gradually perfected. But it soon became evident that the treaty was bound to lead to further consequences, when members of the primitive Church came in contact with Gentile Christians. In Pauline Churches the Jews had overcome their scruples about this intercourse; the others were not prepared for it, and were taken by surprise. For a moment the views of the party diverged. Peter resolved to recognise this fact also as a fruit of the Gentile mission. James, at the head of the majority of the Jerusalemites, protested, and Peter retreated. Schism was inevitable. Paul maintained that the Jews also could live with the Gentiles without the law. The Judaists refused to do this, and held aloof. The mission treaty was not abrogated, but the separation of the two communities was confirmed.

§ 8. *The Acts of the Apostles and the Decree of Jerusalem.*

This sketch, complete in itself, of the history of the negotiations between the Jewish primitive Church and the Apostle Paul, is confronted by another account of the same matter in the narrative of the Acts (chap. xv.). According to this, Jewish Christians made their appearance in the Church of Antioch, and sought to impose circumcision on the Gentile Christians there. It was the Church of Antioch itself that formed the resolution to send to Jerusalem Paul and Barnabas, along with some individuals whose names are not given, in order to lay this disputed question before the Apostles, with a view to a decision. They were there welcomed by the Church, the Apostles and elders; but some of the Christians, who had originally been Pharisees, repeated the demand that Gentile Christians should be circumcised, and should observe the law. When, in a duly constituted assembly, the question led to a violent conflict of opinions, Peter was the first to rise. He began by appealing to the fact that, having been chosen by God for the purpose, he had been the first to promote the conversion of the Gentiles, and that God had confirmed his work by granting the Spirit to his converts. Then he warned them that he tempted God who now sought to impose upon the Gentiles the yoke of the law, which indeed neither their fathers nor they themselves, the present generation of Jews, were able to bear. Besides, they also, as well as the Jews, expected to be saved only through the grace of the Lord Jesus. Upon this the assembly gave a hearing to Paul and Barnabas, in order that they might tell of the signs and wonders God had wrought by them among the Gentiles. Then James also arose, and supported the view of Peter, that the Gentiles were not to be burdened with the law, but, on the other hand, he proposed that they should be directed 'to abstain from pollutions of idols, and from fornication, and from things strangled, and from blood,' appealing, at the same time, to the antiquity of the custom of preaching Moses in all cities on the Sabbath. This proposal was adopted by the Apostles and elders along with the whole

Church. They then added to Barnabas and Paul two messengers chosen from themselves, Judas Barsabbas and Silas, to bear a letter in which the demand of the legalists was refused, Barnabas and Paul were commended, and the above resolution was proclaimed. The embassy was received in Antioch with joy and gratitude. The decree itself was carried out by Paul and Timothy in their next missionary journey in Asia Minor (xvi. 4), and later, at the last visit of Paul to Jerusalem, the elders there again appealed to it (xxi. 25).

§ 9. *The Acts of the Apostles and the Galatian Letter.*

There can be no doubt that this is the event also described by Paul in Gal. ii. 1-10. But, since the narrative is essentially different, the question arises, whether it can be used to supplement the short account of Paul, written as that was for a definite purpose, or whether it is rendered invalid by Paul's narrative in every point in which they differ. If it cannot be reconciled with it, then it falls to the ground. Paul is an eye-witness of the first rank; the author of the Acts belongs to a later period, and works at second hand. It is alleged against the authenticity of Paul's account, on the one hand, that he did not require to relate what everybody knew, and, on the other, that his narrative is not clear. These two reasons refute each other. And to consider the matter in itself, who is to say that his readers were so certain of the facts as to be secure against misrepresentation? The nature of his account, however, proves at once that it was not invented, but grew out of the circumstances.

The whole picture of relations and events which we obtain from the Acts is essentially different from that derived from Paul's statement. In place of conflict we have friendly deliberation. There man opposes man, belief contends with belief, and progress emerges from the struggle of different types of character. Here everything moves in the calm channel of well-ordered conditions, where authority decides, and meets with unflinching obedience. The

elevation of faith and clear insight of the early Apostles direct the Christian religion from the beginning on its far-reaching but settled paths, and Paul is a welcome instrument for its work. The regulations called for in the difficult question of the intercourse between Jews and Gentiles are prompted by a spirit of wisdom and prudence, which beforehand ensures their universal acceptance and beneficial effect. Paul himself not only submits willingly to them, but habitually seeks his support and protection from the supreme powers in Jerusalem, and is subject to their directions. All this results in an attractive picture. It awakens the satisfaction which the spectacle of a peaceful development affords, and we learn to revere men so superior to difficulties, and share in the feeling which plainly guided the author of the narrative, or which, at any rate, he sought to produce. But our satisfaction is lessened on a closer examination. In the narrative, the figures are indistinct, the colours faded, the life that is vivid to a spectator is wanting. Peter proclaims himself an Apostle to the Gentiles and does nothing. James represents Judaism, but only from a culpable deference. Paul is not the unyielding man, who is ruled by nothing in which he does not recognise a Divine revelation, and who never swerves when that has to be defended. He waits on the dictum of his superiors, and carries it out without question. The difference between the Galatian letter and the Acts of the Apostles is the difference between personal observation and the later narrative that brings in its own conceptions to supply the want of direct knowledge.

The account contained in the Acts has, however, not only dragged in its own presuppositions, but has sacrificed important facts to them. It presupposes, especially, the harmony and the undisputed authority of the apostolic government of the Church. The facts omitted by it are therefore such as are inconsistent with this idea, and prove the whole power of the opposition at this crisis. We are at once struck with the circumstance that, while the demand for the circumcision of the Gentiles is mentioned, nothing is said of the particular reference to Titus, and,



indeed, his presence is left unnoticed. By this means a characteristic feature is obliterated at the outset, the trait of energetic self-assertion shown by Paul, when, undeterred by the thought of the challenge involved in his action, he brought the uncircumcised into the midst of the community in Jerusalem. With the omission all doubt about the unanimity on this point between him and the early apostles also disappears. But much more important and conclusive for our estimate of the whole account is the failure of the Acts to give the least hint of what took place in Antioch. It could not entertain the possibility even of the dispute, because it had already placed the institution of the Church there entirely under the oversight of that of Jerusalem, and because the resolution of the synod had removed the difficulty which had arisen by means of a binding and recognised law. It narrates neither Peter's journey nor that of James's emissaries to Antioch. There neither was, nor could be, any dispute about living with the Gentiles. The messengers from Jerusalem stay for some time in Antioch, and the very fact of their work there precludes any variance between the two Churches (xv. 32). In the same way Paul's later labours are wholly unembarrassed (ver. 35). Only one incident recalls the Antiochian dispute. The Acts is also aware of a quarrel which soon arose between Paul and Barnabas. It attributes it, however, to quite another cause, to a difference of opinion as to whether John Mark should assist in their mission (ver. 37-39). But this only diverts attention from the important events which separated even Barnabas from Paul. The complete omission of the Antiochian dispute proves not merely incomplete knowledge, but it can only be characterised as the suppression of a matter which did not suit the aim of the narrative and the preconceptions of the author, and was precluded by the representation given by him of the negotiations in Jerusalem.

But the omission of the above portion of the history coincides with a portrayal of the proceedings in Jerusalem, quite inconsistent with Paul's own statements. Among the differences, the most material affect the attitude of Peter, and the decree which

regulated the position of the Gentiles. Peter appears in the Acts as a mediator and intercessor for Paul. But in his words he does not adopt a middle position. On the contrary, he is a pronounced representative of Pauline principles. In his narrative of his own work he tells us that he himself was the first to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, that they believed on it, and, like the Jews, received in attestation of their faith the Holy Spirit from God 'who knoweth the heart.' God had made no distinction between the two races. He had granted to the heathen the purity requisite for their reception of the Spirit (xv. 9),—the purification of their hearts by faith. But still more. To place the yoke upon the necks of the Gentiles now, and to bind them to the observance of the law, was simply to tempt God: for this yoke their Jewish ancestors had been unable to bear, and the present generation had found it quite as intolerable. Therefore they also believed that they would be saved, like the heathen, only by the grace of the Lord Jesus. Throughout his speech, therefore, Peter expresses himself as none but Paul could have done. There could be no question of any conditions being attached to the admission of the heathens as members of the Church, because the Jews themselves had recognised the impossibility of the law, and it followed, therefore, as a matter of course, that the Gentiles who adopted the faith became, without further conditions, out-and-out Christians. The impermanence of the law is somewhat differently stated than it would have been by Paul. Yet the difference is not great enough to warrant our speaking of a peculiarly Petrine doctrine. It is only a more popular mode of speech. But although the Acts does not exactly put Paul's doctrine of law and faith in Peter's lips, that is a secondary matter. It makes him, in any case, take the very same standpoint in deciding the practical question, and it also ascribes his position to the same principle, namely, the criticism of the law itself. Now, according to the letter to the Galatians, Peter's complacency in Jerusalem did not go so far. His standpoint was wholly different when, at the conclusion of the treaty, he limited himself for the future, as he had done in the past, to the

Jewish mission. It was also different when, with the other Apostles, he merely declared that he had nothing to add to Paul's statement. There is no ground for objecting that he afterwards showed himself willing to recognise the absolute right of the Gentiles, and thus to disregard the duties of the law. Nor need it be urged that Paul also found in Peter's creed, with which he was perfectly familiar, the point of agreement from which he sought to prove to him that the liberty claimed was a necessary consequence of his own belief. It is exactly Peter's behaviour in Antioch that negatives the possibility of his having delivered such a speech as the Acts attributes to him in Jerusalem. If he had been the veteran representative of the Gentile mission, he could not have relapsed again after his first entrance into the community at Antioch. He would thus not merely have recalled a first forward step, but he would have belied his whole past. If nothing but the fear of man brought him to such a pass, then, undoubtedly, an indelible stain is left upon his character.

Besides, the statements with regard to his past career made, according to the Acts, in Peter's speech at Jerusalem, contradict the distinct assertions of Paul. Clearly and bluntly, Paul says in the Galatian letter that Peter's sphere of action had hitherto been the Jewish mission, and nothing else, and that he had pre-eminently vindicated his calling to preach the gospel to the Jews. And this negatives the possibility of Peter having inaugurated the free mission to the Gentiles, because his vocation is thus contrasted with Paul's Gentile mission, not merely with a view to his qualifications, or his choice for the future, but quite as much, and especially, as regards the past. Paul could not possibly have spoken in this way if Peter had supported him by certifying that he himself was his comrade and earliest predecessor in the Gentile mission.

Much more striking than anything we have yet discussed is the relation of the Acts to the epistle in reference to the Jerusalem decree. The resolution and its execution are throughout irreconcilable with Paul's statements, and the discrepancy is of such

a nature as to exclude any possibility of harmonising them. The letter gives us the point of view from which alone we are entitled to estimate the credibility of the narrative, and it must be considered decisive, however conceivable or probable the event may be in itself. The decree tolerates the existence of Gentile Christianity as such. It only imposes on the Gentiles the avoidance of a few things, in order to enable the Jews to hold intercourse with them without causing grave offence. It enjoins abstinence from idols and from sacrifices to idols (the author exchanging the terms after his manner, xv. 20, 29), from unchastity, from what is strangled, and from blood. The motive that here prompts the synod is respect for the law; it finds expression in James's proposal, in the addition (xv. 21) about the long-standing custom of reading the law on the Sabbath in all places, *i.e.* in the whole Diaspora. For the words cannot mean that even the law has never effected more, or that the law was always to continue as it was. They can only give the motive for the injunction. Because the law had its settlement in these towns, it was necessary for all Christians to follow certain general regulations within the precincts consecrated by its presence. It is, therefore, respect for this reading of the law, and for the Jews, which recommends the condition. From this motive, as well as from the contents of the decree, we obtain two inferences as to its more precise meaning. The injunctions are imposed upon the Gentile Christians, not so much because these things, as a whole, are in themselves God's first and most indispensable command to all men, but because they contain the minimum necessary on account of their connection with Jews. And, secondly, they have specially in view the conscientious convictions and opinions of the general body of the Jews.

The Talmud has combined, under the title of the 'seven commandments of Noah,' those which every man was to observe, and the keeping of which was therefore necessarily required from the heathens who wished to live side by side with the Jews in the country of the latter. The conditions of the Apostolic decree are

contained in the list, and, indeed, precisely those of them which influenced daily life, while the others, which concerned public regulations and civil law, as, for instance, the command to obey rulers, and the prohibition of murder and theft, are not in the decree. The duty of keeping God's name holy is also missing, as that was involved in the nature of the faith. Now, since this list had probably been already drawn up by the scribes in the Apostolic age, the conjecture is at once suggested that the prescriptions of the decree are founded on it. They have evidently borrowed from it what seemed necessary for private intercourse with the Jews and out of regard to their feelings. We are thus not dealing with the imitation of any degree of the proselyte relationship. We are dealing with the use of those conditions which, irrespective of fellowship in the faith, were to be observed by the Gentiles, merely on account of the contact with Jews involved in living with them. And not till we have grasped this do we fully understand James's words. For the consideration here demanded refers not merely to Jewish fellow-Christians, but to the Jews in general. Because Moses was read regularly in the towns of the Diaspora, they were to be regarded in the same light as the holy land itself.

If this be the meaning of the decree, it cannot by any means be said to be in itself historically improbable. The idea might very readily occur to the early Church, that in this way the offence, necessarily caused by union with the heathens, might be obviated, and all the more so since the plan rested on a code drawn up by Jewish scribes. Of course the main question of the day, whether the heathen were required by Christianity to submit to the law, was set aside rather than solved. We may infer, but only indirectly, that those Gentiles were united to the Jewish Christians merely as members of an outer circle, the relationship being somewhat similar to that of Jewish converts from heathenism to the Jews. Such an arrangement had, however, an immediate value for the early Church. It protected the members against Jewish complaints that they tolerated heathens in their midst without imposing upon them those recognised obligations.



But we must deny that the decree could have been resolved on, or that it could have been accepted by Paul, at the time, and under the circumstances alleged. The statement that it was cannot be reconciled with Paul's narrative. Not only the silence of the latter contradicts it, but it is confronted as by a wall with the words that the Apostles had nothing to add to him. There is no getting beyond this. It is a round assertion, and perfectly clear. It occurs in a description of all the negotiations with the primitive Church by which Paul's position was to be decided. He was liable to contradiction at any moment, if he swerved in the least from the truth, even by omitting an important circumstance. And he emphasises the accuracy of his words by an appeal to God (i. 20). All possibility of an exception, of anything having been added by the Apostles, is excluded. We cannot get out of this with the remark, that this arrangement, since it did not infringe upon his gospel, or his independence, was secondary and indifferent in his eyes. Nor is it sufficient to say, that it set up hardly anything that was new, but only recalled to memory a usage probably already existing in mixed communities. Paul has not said that nothing burdensome, but that nothing at all was imposed upon him. In connection with the dispute at Antioch he makes absolutely no mention of such an arrangement. And, besides, the Acts is not recording an incidental understanding, but the solemn resolution which was to solve, which further, according to it, did solve, the whole vexed question. Indeed, it assigns to it a more extended influence than the contents of the decree would lead us to expect. For it clearly understands that the whole difficulty caused by their social intercourse in Antioch was removed. Thus Judas and Silas are enabled to stay and join in the life of the city without scruple (xv. 33), and the representation of events makes no allowance, and can find no place for the dispute. The assertion of the Apostle in the letter to the Galatians, excluding as it does any such injunction as that contained in the decree, is still further confirmed by the fact that in discussing a point closely connected with the decree, the eating of flesh that had been offered in

sacrifice (1 Cor. viii. and x.), he not only omits all reference to that document, but his judgment is founded on wholly different premisses. But his precision in recalling everything of the nature of a condition is shown (Gal. ii. 10) by his mention of the request that the Gentiles were to care for the poor in Jerusalem, though it can hardly be called a condition, but might rather be said to be without bearing on the main question of his gospel and his independence. But the decree of the Acts is sent forth to the primitive Church with the whole authority of the Apostles as a condition of the existence of Gentile Christianity.

The Jerusalem decree does not stand in the Acts as an isolated fact. It belongs to a larger section of the history, which seeks consistently to portray, along with the authority of the early Church to which even Paul was subject, the precedence of the Church, under Peter's leadership, in matters affecting the mission to the heathen. The narrative of the baptism of Cornelius and his household in Cæsarea is given by way of proof, and its elaboration shows its demonstrative character. No further examples, indeed, are given of a similar procedure; but when the Church of Jerusalem was brought expressly to approve of Peter's action, it was only logical on his part to appeal to the fact in the conference held with regard to Paul. And the Acts thus shows that it by no means admits the incident to have been merely exceptional. But this entire narrative is also negatived by the letter to the Galatians. Peter was not the pioneer of the mission to the heathen, but entirely and solely the Apostle of the Jews.

#### § 10. *The Sources of the Book of Acts.*

The didactic character of the representation in the Acts, in all the points in which it diverges from Paul, can only serve to confirm the authority which belongs to the Apostle's account as a source of the first rank. We can only obtain a purely historical picture from the Acts by cutting out the presumed embellishments. That does not however imply that the narrative is wholly without

historical value. Precisely the most important part, the decree, is so distinctive, and stands out so prominently from the narrative, that it cannot well be characterised as an invention. But if it does not belong to its present place, then the question arises where we should look for its origin. And this origin will be determined most obviously, if we consider the account given by the book as a whole, and assign it to its probable sources. A considerable portion is explained by supposing that the author has made use of the letter to the Galatians, at the same time elucidating in detail the short statements given there. No difficulty is caused by the discovery that he has omitted much that is important; for the omissions are due to his desire to place the events in another light, and are connected with the aim pursued throughout the book. Other portions, secondly, not taken from the letter, belong merely to the author's mode of representing the facts, and serve, without requiring authorities, to round off the narrative. But these explanations do not cover the whole ground, and in the decree we come upon a fragment which points us back to a special origin.

That the narrative is in the main taken from the letter to the Galatians is supported by the circumstance, that the picture given by it is distinct in all those features which it has in common with the letter, but that wherever it goes beyond its authority, it is either confined to generalities, or seeks to make the common element clear in the style of an expositor. This is the case in the introduction or the occasion of the negotiations, and again in the negotiations themselves.

Paul stated the reason of his journey to have been a revelation, without entering into the thoughts or circumstances that led up to it. Further on he introduced his opponents, the Judaistic party, with merely general designations, in connection with the demand for the circumcision of Titus. He did not enter into the history of the party, of its rise, or its first steps against him. He simply took all that for granted. The Acts now gives the missing explanation, but the designations are again only general, and the features are of such a kind as might be conjectured from Paul's

own words. In particular, no names are given, nor any of those more precise details that would indicate an independent source. The supplementary matter is simply due to a pragmatic editing of the original. The author believes he can best explain Paul's resolve by supposing that the Jerusalemite opponents had not first met him there, but had previously gone to, and set up their demand in Antioch. Paul certainly said nothing of this, and we have every reason to conclude that he confronted them for the first time in Jerusalem, after merely having heard of the agitation in that city. But the other explanation makes the course of events more vivid and more easily understood. And, besides, the Acts by this means makes room for the Antiochian dispute, which it had omitted from its true context. It has only transferred and, at the same time, remodelled the event, in a manner quite in keeping with the author's treatment of separate sections in the Third Gospel. Details are next given of the journey from Antioch to Jerusalem: that Paul and Barnabas were sent with 'certain other of them,' under which phrase Titus is hid,—that their route went through Phœnicia and Samaria,—that on the way Paul and Barnabas delighted the brethren with news of their success among the heathen; but there is nothing in all this to prove a source. The writer merely expands his context, and Samaria, in particular, is dragged in from the Acts itself. And if he had any foundation for what he says, Galatians i. 23 f., where mention is made of the joy shown by the Jewish Churches over Paul's work, is quite sufficient. The same holds true of the welcome given by the Church, the elders and Apostles in Jerusalem, as well as of the information concerning the appearance of the opposition and their demand. There is nothing in this which the author need have known independently of Paul. The statement, also, that the party was formed by the entrance of Pharisees into the Church is only an interpretation, and takes the place of the designation and intentions of the 'false brethren, who had privily come in,' etc., with which Paul had described the origin of the opposition. And, for the rest, the author in these introductory remarks (for they

are nothing more, and it is impossible to deduce from them an earlier assembly), only gives the list of contents for what is to follow, according to a method adopted by him and capable of being proved elsewhere in his writings.

We meet with exactly the same sort of thing when we come to the conference itself. All that is essential can be traced to Paul's account. This is true of Paul and Barnabas' recital of their deeds, which the author designates, after his fashion, as the great signs and miracles which God had done through them. In fact that is simply another way of turning Paul's expression, that he laid the gospel which he preached to the Gentiles before them; the Acts knew nothing more. But Paul's account was also sufficient for the author's sketch of the position of Peter and James, the important men on the other side. Here also Peter stands nearer Paul than James. John, whom Paul had named with them, disappears, because nothing was to be learned about his particular attitude. Now it may be admitted that the principles Peter defends are wholly different from those he represents in the Galatian letter. But it is all the more striking to observe, as we are forced to do, that Peter's speech is after all imitated from the epistle. The author makes him utter the same opinions about law and gospel as Paul, according to the epistle, expressed in Antioch. He may have justified his doing so by holding that Paul there recalled a basis of agreement taken from Peter's own creed. But the fact that Peter opens the conference, and introduces the recital of Paul and Barnabas with this speech, does not presuppose a source. It is merely due to the author's conception that Peter was Paul's predecessor and superior in the mission to the Gentiles. And there is yet another respect in which the Galatian account of the events in Antioch seems to have been made use of by the Acts. Peter's conduct in eating with the Gentiles does not merely agree with his unconditional recognition of Gentile Christianity in Jerusalem. It is antedated, and brought back into the conversion of Cornelius, which is, besides, presupposed in the speech. At Cæsarea Peter had already



accepted the invitation of a heathen, and lived in his house (x. 24, 48, xi. 3). And the vision at Joppa had given him a motive; it necessarily removed all scruples, directing him to eat unclean food without making it a matter of conscience. The whole sketch of Peter was due therefore to the adoption, from Paul's account of the episode at Antioch, of whatever could be applied to the purposes of the author. And the same thing holds good of James's special position. This was involved in his deputation to Antioch. The intention in sending the emissaries was plainly not to impose the law on the Gentiles, but only to guard the Jews against mingling with them. The compulsion of the Gentiles was only a secondary result, the price to be submitted to by them if they demanded intercourse with the Jews. The proposal of the decree by James is alone wholly wanting in the Galatian letter. But it could at any rate be inserted in the view derived from the letter of James's attitude.

The precision with which the author of the Acts grasps the situation in the Galatian letter, even where, in order to suit his conception, he diverges materially from it, has been already shown by the fact that he too has inserted an Antiochian dispute, as if to supply the place of the one omitted. It is also attested by the omission of the question of Titus's circumcision; for this section has also found a substitute in the circumcision of Timothy, which follows, as a sort of supplement, the negotiations in Jerusalem (xvi. 1-3). Paul here does for Timothy what he had refused to do in the case of Titus. In the one instance he had not only defended his Gentile gospel, which excluded circumcision, but had resisted the proposal that, at least, the heathen he had taken with him to Jerusalem should, from quite intelligible considerations, be circumcised. In the Acts he yields to these very considerations. He defers to the prejudices in this instance of the Jews in Lystra and the neighbourhood, to whom it was known that Timothy, though his mother was a Jewess, was the child of a heathen father. In order therefore to avoid giving offence by his familiar intercourse with known Greeks, he resolves to have him circumcised.

The inconsistency is so clear that our only choice is whether to give up the narrative of the Acts or that of Paul. It is impossible to give up the latter. But the author of the Acts, in his desire to assign to Paul a conciliatory position, has passed over his account of Titus, and has yet felt the need of supplying its place with another narrative in keeping with his own view.

§ 11. *The Historical Value of the Decree.*

The dependence on Paul's account shown by the narrative of the Acts is no reason for considering the decree an invention of the author. Simply because we see him working upon a source which distinctly influences him even where he deviates from it, we may the more readily infer that, in the case of this document, inserted by him into Paul's description, and determining the divergence of which we have spoken, he is following an existing authority, which he believed he ought to connect and reconcile with Paul's representation. The conjecture that the decree lay before the author in the form of a tradition is forced upon us by yet another consideration. The decree, with the arguments urged in its support by James, is in its present position no solution of the question raised in Jerusalem. It does not so much decide the belief to be held by the heathen in order to be Christians, as prescribe the customs they were to observe, wherever they were brought into contact with Jews. It is not the question of community of faith that is here solved. The heathens are looked upon as heathens, who while on Jewish soil were to pay deference to the law of the Jews. The decree is not therefore a device invented for this crisis in the history.

Hence we may conclude that such a production, even although it was not determined on, or carried out on the occasion assigned to it, yet was handed down by tradition, and that as a production of the primitive Church. The author of the Third Gospel and the Acts frequently treats his sources with great freedom. He combines them without reference to date, but with reference to the

aspects in which he views his material. He even removes sections from their traditional connection, in order that they may receive in another place their full demonstrative significance. But if we suppose that this decree is in the main historical, there can hardly be any doubt as to its proper date. It cannot have formed part of the agreement with Paul, and just as little can it have originated earlier. The complete separation of the two mission spheres, which, from Paul's words, we know to have existed till then, gave no occasion for it earlier. Therefore it is to be assigned to the next period. Any more precise date is merely conjectural. But yet it is natural to suppose that it was connected with those events in Antioch which are passed over in silence by the Acts. After what took place there, it was necessary for the primitive Church to adopt some position on the question of mixed communities, unless perhaps it had already done so before James sent down his emissaries. In the more probable event of its having done this afterwards, we are to look for the fundamental condition of any resolution on the subject, in the refusal of the early Church to permit its members to meet the Gentile Christians at table. But they were pledged by their agreement with Paul not to reject on that account any who should profess the faith. Therefore it was certainly very natural to solve the question by getting the Gentile Christians, where they lived in contact with Jewish Christians, to submit to the conditions, under which alone the scribes tolerated the presence of heathens on Jewish soil. The composition of the decree is thus perfectly explained on historical grounds. Only it was not a part of the agreement with Paul, but was the consequence of those difficulties which had arisen in carrying it out. If in this way it had a one-sided origin after the split in Antioch, we can understand how Paul took no notice of it either then or afterwards. For him it did not exist. But then it is a fact, which supplements his representation of the historical course of the development of the relation between him and the early Church. And it is at the same time a fixed point, from which we can gauge the further course of events in Jerusalem.

With it the primitive Church definitely marked out its boundaries for the first time ; and in it the development of exclusive Judaism within the Church, and the attacks which, in the sequel, originated from Jerusalem against the Pauline communities, find their explanation.

The Jewish Christian community may then have held its position with regard to the above principles in the face of Gentile Christianity. But this was all it could do. The barrier that had been thus set up collapsed everywhere of itself before the irresistible power with which Gentile Christianity forced its way. Yet the contents of the decree fared differently. Paul had, quite independently, given instructions and directions for the use of sacrificial flesh, without by any means rejecting it in principle. But in the second century it is not merely the Ebionitic Homilies of Clement which (vii. 3) forbid it absolutely. This is done also by Justin (*Dial. c. Tr.* 35) and by Irenæus (*adv. Hær.* i. 6. 2). It had become a universal principle of the Christian Church. Of the use of blood Paul has not spoken in our sources. But in the second century, when it was falsely asserted during the persecution of Christians in Lyons under Marcus Aurelius that they were guilty of bloody orgies at their meetings, the answer was given: 'How could they devour children, when they were not even permitted to eat animals with the blood?' (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* v. 1. 26.) This remonstrance is also found in Minucius Felix, *Oct.* 30, and Tertullian, *Apol.* 9. And Clemens Alexandrinus appeals for the same purpose to the doctrine of the nature of the blood.

Paul's directions regarding the use of sacrificial flesh could hardly obtain a lasting authority. They were too subtle and casuistical. But the occasion to which they were due explains also how the simple prohibition came to be adopted. Converted heathens had deduced the freedom to use the flesh from their higher knowledge, in order not to be obliged to break wholly with their old customs. Further on, in the same line, the use of sacrificial flesh became, along with unchastity (Rev. ii. 14, 20), the sign of a Gnosticising libertinism. And Justin rejected it, like

Irenæus, as a Gnostic heresy. It was now, accordingly, the barrier against Gnosis, and, in truth, against heathenism, which was erected by the unconditional prohibition. Whether the prohibition of the use of blood came to be recognised as authoritative in the same gradual manner, or whether it was due to the Old Testament and a Christian physiology cannot be positively determined. The former opinion is sufficient to explain this also.



## BOOK III

### THE PAULINE CHURCH

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE GREAT MISSION

##### § 1. *The Letters of Paul.*

THE history of the Apostle Paul's great mission to the heathen is to be derived, above all, from his own letters, those authorities of the very first rank. But as they were all written to Churches that had already existed for some time, they take the founding of these for granted, and only refer to it incidentally when there is some distinct call to do so. It is the same with their subsequent history. For the letters arose out of definite crises. These they reflect with perfect distinctness. But what preceded is spoken of only fragmentarily, and often merely indirectly. And with the close of the letters the Church disappears from view; its later destinies remain wholly unknown. In spite of all this, these writings are so pregnant and so clear that they give us everywhere vivid pictures of the life. And, for it is the main thing, the course of events, in its essential conditions, impelling forces, and results, is rendered indisputably clear. However strongly a particular question or task may have claimed his attention, Paul never lost sight of the great or of the whole. In this he lived, and therefore he was what he was. He is not merely the faithful witness for passing events. He is a witness in the higher sense. While engaged in the midst of the movement, he everywhere gives the highest view of its history. He is the witness for its inner forces.

What has been preserved of his letters is little. That he wrote much more is probable in itself, and we have indications that he did. On the other hand, we cannot look on all the letters in the Canon of the New Testament as his work. The so-called pastoral letters to Timothy and Titus were not written by him; they belong to a considerably later period. The so-called letter to the Ephesians owes its title merely to a later conjecture; to the name of Paul it has no right. Besides, even if it were his, it gives us little information. Its historical contents are extremely meagre. The letter to the Colossians, with which also the letter to Philemon is connected, cannot with equal certainty be denied to the Apostle, although strong reasons exist in favour of a different authorship. Apart, however, from these objections, the Church in question was one with which Paul was not personally acquainted, one to which he could only have determined to write during his captivity. In any event, therefore, the letter is no authority for the history of his own Churches. Of the rest, we have only, further, to set aside the second to Thessalonica; it too plainly bears the marks of an imitation. Those to the Galatians and Corinthians are undoubtedly from his hand, and we have overwhelming reasons for attributing to him also the first to Thessalonica and that to Philippi. The letter to the Roman Church is undeniably his; but since this Church was not founded by him, it touches on the history of his mission only occasionally and indirectly. The final portion of the letter has a peculiar interest. It has no right to be incorporated in the epistle, but it was written by Paul, and is of great value.

The practice was general of exchanging letters between the newly founded Churches. They communicated with each other from the first by the help of travellers, but also by means of letters. In this intercourse their consciousness of unity found expression, the belief that a common cause, a lofty aim, a world's destiny were involved. Communication by letters was also combined with the coming and going of missionaries. Letters of introduction were given to them, credentials, *ἐπιστολαὶ συστατικαί*, (2 Cor. iii. 1; cf. 1 Cor. xvi. 3). This need and this intercourse were

embodied in the great Apostle to the Gentiles himself, the bearer of this mission, and the head of the institutions founded by it. His vocation bore him further; but he belonged to the Churches he had instituted, and he substituted for his personal intervention in their affairs, both the sending of deputies who were charged with his commissions and acted in his name, but especially his letters, his written in place of his spoken word. These letters were addressed to the Church, they were publicly read in it, and were then also as a rule communicated to others outside (1 Thess. v. 27; cf. Col. iv. 16). They were naturally circulated in the more immediate neighbourhood, as, *e.g.*, in the province adjacent to the city. Thus the second letter to Corinth was at the same time destined for all the saints in the whole of Achaia (2 Cor. i. 1). What the Apostle wrote was written for this particular Church; his letters are occasional writings. But they contained truths, instructions of universal validity; the Whole, the Church of God, was ever before the writer's eyes. In 1 Cor. i. 2 he gives expression to the intensity of this feeling; he writes to the Church of God in Corinth, but 'along with all who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, among them as well as among us.' In these prophetic words he has foreshadowed the whole future of the epistles. In the address he designates the Church, briefly, *ἐκκλησία* (Gal. i. 2), *ἐκκλησία* of God (1 Cor. i. 2; 2 Cor. i. 1); and, in the same sense, with the addition, 'in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ' (1 Thess. i. 1). But he also takes a pleasure in stating that he turns to every individual member, 'to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, those called to be saints' (1 Cor. i. 2). At times the latter phrase stands by itself instead of the Church. Thus we have, 'all saints in Christ Jesus in Philippi' (Phil. i. 1); 'all who are beloved of God, called to be saints,' in Rom. i. 1, a phrase from which we must not conclude that no definitely formed Church existed there. In the Philippian letter alone are the occupants of an official position, bishops and deacons, specially mentioned (i. 1).

For the most part Paul expressly styles himself in the inscrip-

tion an Apostle, 'the appointed messenger of Christ Jesus by the will of God' (1 Cor. i. 1); 'Apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will' (2 Cor. i. 1). In the letter to the Galatians (i. 1) this is expanded for special reasons: 'Apostle, not from man, nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead;' he thus introduces the defence of his Gospel. In the Roman letter, in the same way, special reasons lead him to paraphrase his superscription: 'a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle, separated for the proclamation of the gospel of God.' Here he was mainly concerned to introduce himself as an Apostle. In the Philippian letter he names himself, on the other hand, simply 'servant of God' (i. 1). But that indicates that he did not mean to write as an individual, but in virtue of his office and commission. On the other hand, he did not write, as a rule, to his Churches merely in his own name. He had collaborators. Who these were depended on circumstances. Either they were his assistants, who had been with him at the founding of the Church, and were still beside him, as, *e.g.*, Silvanus and Timothy (1 Thess. i. 1), Timothy (2 Cor. i. 1, and again, Phil. i. 1). Or it was a member of the Church in question who happened to be with him, *e.g.* Sosthenes (1 Cor. i. 1). In Gal. i. 2 it is all the brethren who at the time were in his company. In any case, it is evident that the letters were to issue not merely from the Apostle in his official character, but also from brethren to brethren, and church to church. Personal relations were represented by special greetings, directed to individuals, for some definite purpose, as in the letter of salutations (Rom. xvi. 1 ff.), which introduced its bearer to the Churches he was entering. Elsewhere, greetings were conveyed to the Church addressed, sometimes from individuals known to its members, sometimes from churches among which Paul was moving at the time (1 Cor. xvi. 19, 20).

As Apostolic letters to the Churches, the epistles took the place of oral addresses, and, indeed, of addresses delivered in their congregational meetings. Hence is explained the customary benediction at the beginning, and again at the close, and, further,

the fact that, in spite of certain differences in detail, this benediction on the whole represents a standing formula. At the opening we have uniformly 'Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ' (Rom. i. 7; 1 Cor. i. 3; 2 Cor. i. 2; Gal. i. 3; Phil. i. 2). It is abbreviated only in 1 Thess. i. 1, 'Grace to you, and peace,' an abbreviation which is plainly due to the Church being designated in the foregoing inscription as a 'Church in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.' The form at the close presents a greater variety. The simplest is 1 Thess. v. 28 (Rom. xvi. 20): 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (be) with you.' A slight variation of this is given in Gal. vi. 18 and Phil. iv. 23, where, instead of 'with you,' there occurs 'with your spirit.' An abbreviation occurs in 1 Cor. xvi. 23: 'The grace of the Lord Jesus (be) with you.' The 'our' is wanting also in Phil. iv. 23. The fullest form is in 2 Cor. xiii. 13: 'The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, (be) with you all.' We have something like an echo of the second clause in his own blessing appended in 1 Cor. xvi. 24 to the benediction: 'my love (be) with you all in Christ Jesus.' In the concluding benediction, accordingly, the deviations are not too great to prevent us recognising there also the liturgical formula on which it was based.

There are also other respects in which the letters recall the oral address. Their structure is based on a certain order of the parts, which, while by no means strictly adhered to, is yet always plainly apparent in spite of divergences. If we leave out of account the inscription with the benediction, and the close with its special commissions, communications, greetings, and blessing, the bulk of the contents falls, according to the rule above mentioned, into three divisions. In the first, the Apostle seeks to come, as it were, into touch with the Church, he assumes his position relative to it, and expresses himself concerning its general condition. In the second, he imparts instruction and discusses questions of the faith and life; this is the lecture proper, in the wider sense of the term. The third division contains exhortations

of all sorts; it deduces the application, and is the charge which befits the Apostle in his official capacity. The two Corinthian letters diverge furthest from this plan. The Roman letter represents it most perfectly, because it did not rise out of personal intercourse.

In this epistle, the first section is designed to secure for the Apostle his relation to the Church, by establishing the fact that his calling embraced it, and by indicating, at the same time, his knowledge of their state as Christians. This section he treats in such a way that the subject and aim of the instructive part seem to grow out of it of themselves. The second section then follows: it contains his doctrinal teaching, and receives fuller treatment than the earlier (i. 18 to xi. 36). Instruction is succeeded by exhortation (xii. 1 to xv. 13). This does not however close the letter, but, on account of the peculiar relation existing between him and the Roman Church, he (xv. 14-33) resumes the first part and completes it. The Galatian letter approaches Romans most nearly in its method, although the tone of the first part is, owing to circumstances, wholly different. Here he did not require to introduce himself to his readers. His writing was due to their inconstancy. He begins with reproaches, and passes on to a defence of himself. In this case, also, his skilful development of the argument leads him naturally to the introduction of the didactic section (iii. 1). This section itself is throughout, at one and the same time, exhortation, warning, and pleading; for it treats of the true gospel, which the readers were upon the point of losing. But the parenetic portion, the moral exhortation, really begins at v. 16. The first letter to the Thessalonians begins (i. 2) with that more intimate greeting of the Church which corresponded with their praiseworthy state and their settled relations to the Apostle, and with thanks to God for them, and this is therefore to be regarded as the form of the first section under normal conditions. This letter also has the hortatory portion at the close (from iv. 1). The whole middle part (ii. 1 to iii. 13) contains, for the rest, not so much instruction proper, as, what is here equivalent, an impres-



sive reminder of the early stages of their Christianity, the pledging of their faith, and the union thus formed with the Apostle. The regular plan of the whole is unmistakeable. Quite similarly we have in the Philippian letter the introduction with thanks to God for the Church, and the close from iv. 1 with its exhortation, while, again, the middle main section, in accordance with the circumstances, consists, on the one hand, of a collection of news items, on the other, of a discussion of Church affairs which leads at all points to reflections on the faith. The divergence from the usual design in the two Corinthian letters is to be explained by their origin; yet even in them traces of it are not wholly wanting. The first letter begins with the writer's thanksgiving for the living faith of the Church, and the last section, the defence of belief in the resurrection, develops, as it proceeds, into words of advice (cf. xv. 32-34, 50, 57 f.). For the rest, the whole of the main contents of the letter are due, partly to information received by the Apostle about the Church, partly to inquiries which the members had laid before him in writing, and they therefore resolve into a series of discussions on the special subjects thus raised. The second letter deviates still further from the usual division. It was extorted from him by the pressure of the times. In it all is life and conflict, nor would an orderly discussion of pending questions have been adapted to the situation. The topics are all intertwined. Only the aim, the design of re-establishing his connection with the Church, gave unity to the Apostle's thought. The articulation of the whole consists in the progress of the speech; but the speech is that of an advocate. And yet even here Paul begins (i. 3) with a 'Praise God' which secures his relation to the Church (i. 6 f.). And his apology, also, passes from xii. 19 into an urgent exhortation. Thus we see how firmly rooted was the habit of adhering to this plan, yet how freely the man of genius moved within its limits.

Paul dictated his letters, as is proved by the appendices added with his own hand. In the Galatian letter we find one of these (vi. 11 ff.), and its first words are: 'See with how large letters I

write in my own hand.' What he has thus written takes the form of awkward, angular sentences, piled one upon another like so many flats, summing up the whole aim of the letter in judicial decrees, and full of a masterful self-consciousness. 'This is so, and by this I stand.' We seldom meet with this dictatorial tone in the body of the letter, and there it is never so sweeping nor so curt. Speech came easier to him than writing, but into every sentence he himself penned was thrown the whole weight of his personality. Again, in the first letter to the Corinthians (xvi. 21) we have a greeting added in the Apostle's handwriting, 'The greeting of Paul, in my own hand.' But we must take along with this the words that follow: 'Let him who loves not the Lord be accursed. Maran-atha. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus.' These words bear the impress of his style with almost greater distinctness than the postscript to the Galatian letter. The peculiar addition to the closing benediction is also explained by the fact that the Apostle has himself written it. On the other hand, Rom. xvi. 22 at least proves that he dictated in other letters than those we have mentioned. There Tertius, the amanuensis, while describing himself as such, adds his own greeting. In the rest, postscripts in the Apostle's handwriting may be conjectured rather than proved. The conjecture is well founded, 1 Thess. v. 25 ff., in the contents and tone of the brief sentences; and we have also to consider the analogy between verse 26 and 1 Cor. xvi. 20, in both cases suggested by a practice observed by congregations. We are also entitled to suppose we have such a postscript in Phil. iv. 21 f., after the 'Amen' of the doxology (ver. 20). The same thing holds true of the concise exhortations, 2 Cor. xiii. 11, where besides we have a recurrence of the same phenomenon as in 1 Thess. v. 26, 1 Cor. xvi. 20. Less certain is the doxology, Rom. xvi. 25-27.

Many peculiarities in the Apostle's language are connected with his practice of dictating. We must not, of course, let this idea carry us too far. Paul created his own language to a large extent, and therefore we are everywhere conscious of the effort he

required to express himself. The fundamental notions in his doctrine, *σὰρξ* and *πνεῦμα*, *θάνατος* and *ζωή*, *χάρις* and *πίστις*, *σωθῆναι* and *δικαιωθῆναι*, are new neither in name nor meaning. But originality was already involved in his indisputable departure from the Jewish theology in which he had been trained, in his resorting to Scripture itself for his material, and in attaching his system to that. Even what he obtained from this source however received in his creed a new content; hence the many-sidedness of the notions, the fulness of the thought packed into the narrow compass of the expression. The same effort of his mind in its struggles to convey the thought is everywhere apparent in the form and syntax of the clauses, in the use of the prepositions, *ἐν*, *εἰς*, *σύν*, and of the particles *δὲ*, *γὰρ*, *οὖν*, *ἄρα οὖν*, *νῦν*, *ὅτι*, *διότι*. Other features, such as the abrupt questions and exclamations, were already characteristic of his living speech, his spoken word. But the frequent anacoluthons and parentheses are especially the marks which indicate the practice of dictating. For the rest, his whole diction expresses the individuality of the writer in a manner of which we can only say that it is in the style of the oral address, because Paul could not give utterance to his thoughts without pouring out his whole soul, and revealing, at every moment, his true character. He himself admitted to his opponents that he was no great speaker (1 Cor. i. 17, 2 Cor. x. 10 ff., xi. 6). But his admission can only have applied to the art of finished oratory and the self-confidence of the orator. Yet he was a speaker, and he knew it too, the born speaker whose influence depended upon the power of his thoughts and the force of his individuality. The discussion of his subject was always taking with him the form of a direct address. In the midst of the carefully constructed proof from Scripture, and the dialectic development of his argument, he produced his greatest effects with those grand conceptions which burst upon us with all the force of truths intuitively grasped. Everything, to the minutest detail, was constantly directed to the loftiest aims. In the course of a business-like discussion he spoke from man to man. What he had to say was of sacred interest.

It would not be easy to instance a similar interplay of mood and feeling, and yet, through it all, Paul is ever the same. In this unparalleled individuality we have the strongest proof of the genuineness of the letters, but also the greatest difficulty in the way of understanding them. But their genuineness is vouched for, besides, by the fact that they furnished the first motive for making a collection of apostolic writings.

### § 2. *The Sphere of the Mission.*

The first period of Paul's activity embraced seventeen, or from another point of view fourteen, years. If we assume that his conversion took place A.D. 35 (see above), then we have A.D. 52 as the date of the council in Jerusalem (Gal. i. 18, ii. 1). We also obtain this date by other means, if we reckon backwards from the year 59 as the year of the Apostle's imprisonment, taking the dates given in the Acts for the missionary journeys and longer residences in order to make up the intervening seven years. The dates of the Acts have, however, only a limited value, and leave many gaps. But even the time of the imprisonment is uncertain. The point is that the procurator Felix was recalled at the latest in the year 61, but Paul was imprisoned under him for two years previously in Cæsarea. But, as will appear further on, the account of these events gives us no sure foundation; the imprisonment may possibly have occurred later. The period of the great mission would thus be prolonged. Still, it would even then be under ten years, and the greatness of its achievements in relation to the time required for them would, in any case, be undiminished.

The earlier and longer period is also great, when we measure it by its intrinsic importance. In it the ground was broken and the foundations were laid, and nothing was left to be added to the fundamental principles. But the extension of the mission in the new epoch out-distanced all before it in boldness and success. In place of the work in Syria and a strip of Asia Minor, we are now face to face with the series of conquests in a wide region of the

Roman empire. When we glance at all we know of the work, and reckon the time taken by it, whether it be by the journeys and residences in particular places as noted in the Acts, or by the actions and vicissitudes of which Paul's letters inform us, in any case there is still just room for them in the short period of these years. They are occupied with a wealth of incident, filled with unresting work and wonderful adventures, a truly overpowering picture. And our more precise knowledge shows us but a fragment and an imperfect outline of what happened.

The great change which took place in Paul's activity after the conference with the primitive Apostles demands an explanation; and for this we can only look to events. Here we may take into consideration both the Jerusalem treaty and the Antiochian dispute. The recognition given to him by the heads of the Church in Jerusalem covered not merely his previous divinely-inspired work among the heathen, it also applied to the future. Paul and Barnabas were to labour among the heathen, as the others among the Jews. They were thus set free for and empowered to adopt their calling, but they were also excluded from Jewish-Christian territory, and therefore directed, though in peace, abroad. The events in Antioch ensued. If one thing had become clearer than another, it was that direct co-operation was not yet possible between the two parties, that the time was not ripe for obliterating the boundary between the two spheres. This result could not but determine Paul to continue his work in another region, where he would enjoy perfect freedom and be remote from strife, and to develop that work to the greatness and perfection which already belonged to it in his thought, and which could, moreover, alone lead to the future realisation of union. We should meanwhile, however, be certainly in error, were we to derive Paul's new resolution exclusively from the conflicts involved in these relationships, if we imagined him to have been driven abroad by them. The nexus lies deeper. The treaty of Jerusalem undoubtedly gave Paul a greater sense of inward freedom. He went to Jerusalem, in the first place, to prove that he had not run, that he



was not running, in vain. He also obtained his justification in this sense. But more than this was involved for Paul in the result, and he had sought more. The impulse to go to Jerusalem proves that he felt himself under a restraint, so long as the mutual understanding was withheld, so long as his relation to the primitive Church was involved in doubt. The treaty had removed the restraint. He now felt himself free on that side, and, at length, doubly justified and impelled to fulfil his calling thoroughly.

Great as was the actual extension of the Pauline Mission, the intentions and aims of the Apostle went still further. He was convinced that his apostolate extended to all nations (Rom. i. 5). It was in this widest sense that he construed the duty it laid upon him: 'to Greeks and barbarians, to wise and ignorant, am I debtor' (i. 14). On the Apostle's lips this was no mere exuberance of emotion, or ideal description of his calling, to be referred only to its character; it was the task to be accomplished by his actual work. In the oldest Jewish-Christian Church it was a settled maxim, that the gospel was to be conveyed to all the cities of Palestine, and it was as certainly a maxim for Paul, that it must reach all nations, and that he was individually intrusted with the duty of securing that it should do so. For the universal proclamation of the gospel was not to him a thing that, though ultimately certain because decreed by God, might yet only be accomplished after decades, after centuries had elapsed; he believed that it must be completed in all haste, before the Lord should come. The idea contained in his conception of his calling ceases to appear fantastic as soon as it is connected with this belief. And, besides, under the Roman empire the great heathen world had now become a unity which could be surveyed and reached in all its parts as readily as a single nation in earlier times. There are two utterances, however, in this same letter to the Romans which show how the idea had grown into a definite plan in the thoughts of the Apostle. At the date, already advanced, of the composition of that epistle, he had completed, and was therefore in a position to review, a considerable portion of his task. Not only indeed did



the gospel start from Jerusalem, but Paul himself had begun at the same centre (Rom. xv. 19); for there he is stating what he had accomplished since the treaty of Jerusalem. Now, since then he had penetrated westward as far as Illyricum, *i.e.* to the shores of the Adriatic. But not indeed in a straight line. On the contrary, more important than the distance traversed, is the indication that between these termini his enterprise described a circuitous route within the wide boundaries we have given. It was, therefore, a type of his whole task, which embraced the great sphere of the globe inhabited by heathen nations. But at the same moment Paul indicates his aim in all its greatness by naming the still more distant limit in the West, to which he now proposed to penetrate (Rom. xv. 24). His plans extended to Spain as the western boundary of the world.

It may well be that his plan and aim were not so completely grasped from the beginning as they appeared to him in this retrospect. The Apostle was no doubt guided in his selection of particular routes by circumstances. Yet we have no right to suppose that his deliberate choice had no independent part in determining them. It is wholly impossible but that his fixed and ultimate object should have also suggested definite aims which he kept constantly in view from the beginning. Both explanations of his conduct meet us alternately in his statements as to his course of action. In 2 Cor. x. 13, he describes his visit to Corinth and his founding of a Church there as providential; 'God,' he says, 'apportioned to him the measure of his province, and in this way he came even unto them.' In Rom. i. 13 ff., he says that he had intended to visit Rome, and that not merely at a later time than the date of his letter, but long before; 'years ago,' as he tells us (Rom. xv. 23). But we hardly need such a definite assertion in order to ascribe this intention to him. If he desired to convert the heathen world, then the thought of the metropolis was inevitable. And yet he had not succeeded in reaching it; obstacles were continually presenting themselves. But this is not the only remarkable omission of the kind. It is almost as striking

that Paul did not go to Alexandria, and, indeed, that there is no hint of any such intention having occurred to him, although the place seems to be of greater importance for the idea underlying his enterprise, and, besides, lay near enough. The entire omission of this city gives rise to the conjecture that Paul did not visit Alexandria because of the very fact that we might have expected to take him there, the fact, namely, that it was the most important place in the Jewish Diaspora. His avoidance of the city, where he must inevitably have entered into a discussion with a Jewish population, at once so extensive and so peculiarly cultured, is quite in harmony with his conviction that he had been called to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. Here, then, we would find a maxim which would of itself set a boundary, at least in one direction, to his wide and universal plans. But his designs were demonstrably subject to a second and more serious limitation, one due to his principle of always confining himself to new fields of labour, of never turning his attention to any place which had been wrought, or prepared to his hand, by another. Paul appeals with the greatest emphasis to this principle, contrasting it with his attitude to Corinth (2 Cor. x. 16), and he derives from his rule the claim to maintain his own mission field unshared. But Rome is once more the most remarkable example of his unswerving adherence to his principle. Even in his first declaration (Rom. i. 9-15), where he begins by speaking in general terms of the hindrances that had frustrated his wish to visit Rome, we can hardly fail to perceive a certain mental debate. And when he returns to the subject at the close of the letter, he speaks unreservedly of the conflict of motives. His avoidance of Rome had been due, not merely to external hindrances, but rather to his own dislike to go to a place already wrought by another. It was a point of honour with him 'not to preach where Christ's name was already confessed, lest he should build upon another man's foundation' (Rom. xv. 20). His position was, therefore, that he felt most strongly the impulse and desire to go to Rome, and, on the other hand, the thought recurred persistently that he could only do so

by breaking the principle, to him so important, of refraining from a sphere which belonged to another. For this very reason this goal was not merely one that occupied his thoughts continually and actively, but it had become for him a source of actual distress. Still he found a means of solving the difficulty in his proposed journey to Spain. 'He would go there by Rome' (Rom. xv. 24). In this way he could stay for a reasonable time in the city, in order to satisfy his craving to expound his gospel in the metropolis of the world, yet without making it a station of his own. It would only be a halting-place on his travels, and his principle of abstinence would remain intact. But Paul did not carry out these plans. He never reached Spain; he came to Rome only as a prisoner. The catastrophe of his life had overtaken him. His actual mission remained, therefore, but a fragment, though a fragment of overwhelming vastness. In the last days of his active labours, before his visit to Jerusalem, he has reviewed them in a foreboding spirit, and thus we can see their extent. And here we note once more the greatness of his conception and purpose, for he attaches this survey of his work to the provinces of the Roman empire which the gospel had, as it were, conquered. The names of these provinces show us what he included under the circuit between Jerusalem and Illyricum. Macedonia, Achaia, Asia, and Galatia composed the mission-sphere of the Apostle, or the seats of his Churches. It is at the outset noteworthy that the Apostle prefers to give us in his letters the names of the countries, not those of the cities, in which he had laboured. At a quite early date he speaks with satisfaction (1 Thess. i. 7, 8), of the effects that had been produced by the beginnings of Christianity in Thessalonica upon the two provinces of Achaia and Macedonia. Later, in connection with his travels, he always prefers to mention provinces, where, to say the least of it, a definite city might have been given as appropriately; as, *e.g.*, 2 Cor. ii. 13, vii. 5, Macedonia. The house of Stephanas is called the first-fruits of the gospel, not for Corinth, but for Achaia (1 Cor. xvi. 15), and, in the same way, Epænetus is the first-fruits of Asia (Rom. xvi. 5). The

Apostle (2 Cor. xi. 9, 10) obtained support while in Corinth, and he accepted it from Macedonia in contrast with Achaia. Yet from Phil. iv. 15 we know that it was only the town of Philippi that was concerned in the matter; and we thus see how strong Paul's tendency was to introduce the province in this and similar statements. But the position of matters is best illustrated towards the end of his career by the collection made in the Churches for Jerusalem. Here we come in contact with a kind of corporate administration of the Pauline Churches. From the earliest information which we have about this matter we learn (1 Cor. xvi. 1) that Paul had given his first instructions on the subject in Galatia. Later (2 Cor. viii. 1, ix. 2) we find that Macedonia had taken action, and become the pattern for Achaia. Paul further (Rom. xv. 26) names these two provinces as undertaking the collections, without making mention of Galatia. Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia were accordingly interested in it as the main sections of the Pauline Church. On the other hand, Asia took no part in it, although we find (1 Cor. xvi. 19) the Churches of Asia also regarded as those of a Pauline province (cf. 2 Cor. i. 8; Rom. xvi. 5). On this point we can only say at present that the relations of Paul to the latter province were not so secure or settled as they were elsewhere, and, therefore, it did not participate in the same way in the collection.

Now, with regard to the provinces just named, we also know from the letters of Paul, in every case except that of Galatia, the towns which formed the centres of his church planting, Philippi and Thessalonica in Macedonia, and Corinth in Achaia, while in Asia, Ephesus, according to 1 Cor. xvi. 8 (cf. xv. 32), held the like position. On the other hand, no name of a city is forthcoming for Galatia, and the letter is addressed to the Churches of the country. Their adherents are called Galatians, while, on the contrary, in the second Corinthian letter the saints of all Achaia are only included in the address along with the Church of Corinth. All the more for this, the question rises as to the meaning given to the name Galatia by the Apostle. Did he understand by it the territory which in earlier times belonged to Phrygia, and to which the Gallic

tribes which had settled there gave the name? Or did he mean the Roman province of Galatia, formed by Augustus by uniting with it the countries of Lycaonia, Pisidia, and Paphlagonia? Almost our only difficulty is caused by deference to the Acts, and the attempted harmonising between its representations and the Galatian letter. It is this that has hampered the question, and complicated it with false reasons for the one or the other view. The only passage in which Paul himself mentions the Churches of Galatia, namely, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, would, if taken along with his whole treatment of the matter there discussed, hardly leave any doubt that he refers to the Roman province as it then existed. This result is certain, quite apart from the inscription of the Galatian letter (i. 2), 'to the Churches of Galatia,' and from the contents of the letter. Besides, from the inscription itself we can only infer that no ruling city existed among the Churches like Corinth in Achaia; and this does not, at least, impugn the wider idea of Galatia. Nor can it be objected that the address, in iii. 1, to the readers under the name of Galatians presupposes a single race, *i.e.* of course the Galatians. For, on the one hand, if we are led to think there of Churches in the composite province, we need not expect in the address an enumeration of the individual peoples and tribes. And, on the other hand, on the supposition of the narrower conception of the region of Galatia, the theory would still prove too much, since, in this case, we could hardly suppose that Gauls had alone been converted, to the exclusion of the Greeks who lived among them. The Galatian letter itself contains no sort of hint, either of the special religion or nationality of the Galatians, and it is striking that in iii. 28 it says nothing of barbarians. The epistle therefore offers, in any case, no proof to counterbalance the fact that elsewhere in the Apostle's writings only the great Roman province can be understood under the name of Galatia, although this does not yet decide as to the destination of the letter.

For the relative dates at which these four provinces were won, or, rather, Churches were founded in them, we can obtain from the

Pauline letters a secure, though only a general basis. Of course it is only exceptionally that the epistolary style, when recalling facts, passes into a sort of narrative, and even then it is only slight sections we are presented with from the complete picture of the historical development. Here the opinion is at once confirmed that the view of his advance from Judæa to Illyricum derived from Rom. xv. 19 ought not to be taken as if the separate districts followed one another in their natural order. This is negatived by the very fact that Asia was manifestly last, his work there having only begun long after the Churches in Macedonia and Achaia had been founded. At the time when the door opened for him in Ephesus (1 Cor. xvi. 8), a considerable part of his Corinthian experiences belonged already to the past. Asia was therefore the latest scene of his labours. Of the two other provinces named, Macedonia again is ranked before Achaia. This follows already from the fact that his close connection with Philippi falls, (Phil. iv. 15), into 'the beginning of the gospel,' *i.e.* of course the beginning of his whole missionary labours. Macedonia then appears also for a long time as the secure point, which, during all confusion and troubles elsewhere, always afforded him a safe retreat. Thence he went at first, as is to be learned from 1 Thess. iii. 1, to Athens and Corinth; and in Macedonia itself the mission began in Philippi, and was carried into Thessalonica (1 Thess. ii. 2, cf. Phil. iv. 15). The order is therefore Macedonia, Achaia, Asia. As to Galatia, his connection with the province was of long standing, and lasted to the day when he entered fully into the work in Ephesus (1 Cor. xvi. 1). On the other hand, we have no definite statements from the Apostle regarding the relative dates of the Galatian Churches and those in Macedonia and Achaia. This only is certain, that the planting even of the Churches in Galatia did not take place till after Paul's experiences in Jerusalem and Antioch. We must therefore be content to set their origin side by side with that of those in Macedonia and Achaia, without being able here to ascertain their exact order. But if we take together the two facts, that Asia came last in order, and that



Galatia, according to Gal. iv. 13, was only incidentally and by chance a mission-field of his, we see distinctly that, from the beginning, Paul's look was chiefly directed towards Greece, and that he moved steadily towards the West. And this is in harmony with the idea of the new vocation.

The letters of Paul, however, do not merely acquaint us with the sphere of his mission and the chief lines it followed. They describe also, to some extent, the varied and extended journeys taken by him in this territory. We learn from the Galatian letter at least that Paul at the time of writing had already been twice in Galatia. From the first Thessalonian letter we know the Apostle's route on his first European journey as far as Corinth. When he wrote the second Corinthian letter he had been twice in that city, and there is no reason to doubt that he accomplished the third visit announced in the letter. The first Corinthian letter indicates a number of journeys. In the same way, his letter to Rome contains clear statements of his constant and 'much journeying,' and shows us also that from Macedonia or Achaia he had come further to the West than other sources indicate. In describing, in 2nd Corinthians, the sacrifices involved in his calling, he speaks with especial vividness of his numerous travels by sea and land. We might say that he must have spent the greater portion of these seven years in constant movement, in order to widen his range and make new conquests, and not only so, but in order to preserve his conquests, to overcome disturbances, to build up what he had begun, and to bind the constituent parts into one whole. But besides this we find that his stay was by no means equally brief in all places, or limited by the necessity of establishing the mere beginnings of the movement. Single prominent centres attached him to their service for a longer period. In 1st and 2nd Corinthians we learn that in his latest years he stayed for a considerable time in Ephesus. In Corinth also his first visit was plainly prolonged. And in the same way we infer from various indications that his stay in Philippi was not overly brief. From this it is also clear that during his whole period he had ceased to

have a settled home from which to undertake his journeys, but that the progress of the mission determined his various places of abode one after the other.

### § 3. *The Account of the Acts.*

The history of the Pauline Mission and Churches derived from the letters is supplemented in essential respects by the Acts. Only we must not simply make the latter our ground-work, and insert our inferences from Paul's statements at the most suitable places. It is above all an error to try to unite the two narratives under the idea that we possess in them two witnesses of equal value and authenticity, and are therefore justified in occasionally doing violence to Paul's statements. Where the statements of the two differ, Paul alone can decide. But, further, the hypothesis is incorrect, that at least the outline of the history in the Acts may be looked on as supplying an independent and sure foundation for our knowledge of the times. The book gives us neither a complete history of the mission nor a biography of the Apostle; least of all a history of the Pauline Churches from their planting to the end of Paul's labours. The plan announced at the beginning (i. 8), to unfold the testimony of the Apostles of Jesus: to describe, accordingly, the expansion of the gospel from Jerusalem to the end of the world, the author has undoubtedly restricted, in the second part of his book, to the labours of the Apostle Paul. Not only are events in Jerusalem set aside during the later period, the primitive Apostles themselves disappear wholly from his narrative. Peter, indeed, is left unmentioned after the conference in Jerusalem. It is also in keeping with this, that Paul is no longer, as in the earlier period, dependent to a certain extent on Jerusalem, but acts in entire freedom and independence. Even Barnabas, whom we must suppose from 1 Cor. ix. 6, to have returned to the Apostle in spite of the collision at Antioch, we no longer meet with after his task as mediator between Paul and Jerusalem had come to an end. Now as this

complete recognition of the great Apostle to the Gentiles at once speaks for the historical character of this description, so also we cannot fail to perceive that the author is much more accurately informed in the whole of the second part than in the first, where many traits show us unmistakeably that his knowledge of Jerusalem is uncertain, that of a remote observer. Here all the characters are more distinct and the colours fresher; a crowd of facts and names show the narrator's closer intimacy with his material. But still his account is subject to certain limitations, which are due not only to his aim but undoubtedly to some extent to defect of knowledge and information.

The aim of the author explains why we learn from him as good as nothing about the inner history of the Pauline Churches. He sought to portray the extension of the gospel, the planting of the Churches. Anything else did not come within his plan. Nor, therefore, should it be an objection to the book that it gives us but a slight indication of the great and many-sided activity of the Apostle disclosed by the letters, in instructing and admonishing, in guiding and arranging the conditions of the Churches. Connected with this also is the complete omission of the dark side of the picture, his persecution by Judaistic opponents, their attacks upon him, and their intrusion into his Churches. This also belonged to the inner history, though here, undoubtedly, another motive was at work. In the later section the author has not given up his view of the unity between Paul and the primitive Church, the view which he had set up in his history of the Jerusalem negotiations as a kind of programme for the future. His silence as to the dispute in Antioch is balanced by his failure to find room for the Judaists in Galatia and Corinth. It is only on Paul's arrival at Jerusalem that we learn (xxi. 21), that the mass of believers there were hostile to him, because they had heard that he taught the Jews in the Diaspora to forsake Moses: to refrain from circumcising their children, and to abandon the customs of the Law; an accusation which Paul was at once prepared to refute. Another striking omission is to be similarly explained. The Acts tells us

nothing of the great collection which Paul had instituted in his Churches for the poor in Jerusalem, even though, owing to the omission, the journey is deprived of its motive. But the book had not introduced the imposition of this duty in its place, and the purpose which Paul connected with that great institution does not receive its whole significance in the narrative. Thus this circumstance is also explained by the aim and conception of the account.

The case is otherwise, however, with certain omissions which not only are incapable of any such explanation, but involve facts that would rather have fitted in with the writer's view, and could only have completed it. It is manifest that the Acts has given but an imperfect statement of the Apostle's travels. This is unquestionable with regard to one journey to Corinth. At the time of writing 2nd Corinthians the Apostle had already been twice there, and he now entertained the idea of a third visit. From the Acts we infer only a first and final visit. In the same way there is a want of any accurate acquaintance with the two visits to Galatia referred to in the Galatian letter. And finally, Paul seems from Rom. xv. 19 to have gone farther west than we can gather from the Acts. With the journeys are inseparably connected the accidents that befell (2 Cor. xi. 25) the Apostle in making them. Where are we told that he suffered shipwreck three times, and was for twenty-four hours at the mercy of the waves? Where do we read of his perils on rivers, from robbers, in the wilderness, on the sea? But the case is the same, or, at any rate, similar with the rest of the sufferings attached to his calling, which the Apostle has grouped together in the above-cited passage. He speaks there of many instances of imprisonment, flogging, and danger to life; he especially tells how from the Jews he five times received 'the forty save one,' and was thrice beaten with rods; how he was once stoned. In addition (1 Cor. xv. 32) he fought with wild beasts in Ephesus, and again (2 Cor. i. 8 f.) he was threatened in Asia, as it seemed, with inevitable death. Yet of all this very little is to be found in the Acts. The stoning in Lystra (xiv. 19), the im-

prisonment and flogging in Philippi (xvi. 23), are the only incidents to which we can find any reference. In the other instances in Damascus, Jerusalem, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Thessalonica, Berea, and Ephesus, his persecutors stop short at threats, accusations, and expulsion. Now there is undoubtedly a distinction to be made at this point. We may suppose that, at any rate in the case of punishments and misuse at the hands of men, the author's omissions were intentional, not only because he sought to lessen the darker shades that obscured the splendour of the life depicted by him, but because he was evidently anxious everywhere to show that none but groundless accusations were publicly brought against the gospel, as, *e.g.*, in Corinth (xviii. 13 ff.). But it is not so with the accidents by sea and land. To the Apostle, his sufferings, as a whole, were merely a witness to the authenticity of his calling, and 'a glory.' The view taken of this portion of his history can be illustrated for a quite early date by the instance of Clemens Romanus, who, clearly following a written authority, or, at any rate, a current compilation, recounts (1 Cor. v.), in a manner similar to Paul's own, how the latter had worn fetters seven times, and been exiled and stoned. If, therefore, the Acts corresponds so meagrely in this respect to the Apostle's own statements, we can only conclude that the author's omissions were due to want of information.

These observations are sufficiently important to enable us to conclude that the author was not merely inadequately informed, but that he was dependent on defective sources, and it is therefore also self-evident that he had not lived through the events, or rather the period, as a companion of the Apostle Paul. But further, this also assists to explain the fact that the narrative is partly written with a free hand and a direct tendency, and is partly without doubt incorrect. To the former category belong, according to a view long since clearly stated and ever pressing itself again upon us, the portions where Paul's experiences and actions conform to those of Peter at an earlier date, portions which bear more or less the impress of the legend, or serve to demonstrate that the Apostles were of equal rank. Thus Paul is miraculously delivered from



his fetters at Philippi just as Peter had been in Jerusalem. He comes into conflict with soothsayers, as Peter had done with Simon the Samaritan; first it is with Elymas in Paphos, then with the prophetess in Philippi, and lastly with the seven sons of the Jewish high-priest Sceva in Ephesus. Paul imparts the Spirit to the disciples of John, as Peter imparted it to those who had been converted in Judæa after Stephen's persecution. The people of Ephesus seek to cure their sick with Paul's napkins and handkerchiefs, precisely as the Jerusalemites had sought to cure theirs by Peter's shadow, and finally, we have Peter's success in raising the dead in Joppa set off by the case of Eutychus. But that decidedly erroneous traits have found their way into the narrative is sufficiently evident in the constant endeavour to describe Paul's missionary procedure as following the same course in city after city. He begins at the synagogue—except in Athens—and only then, after the disbelief of the Jews has been tested anew, passes on to the Gentiles. The question here is not the best means of starting the work, not, therefore, that a point of contact was most easily found among the heathens who had already joined the Jews as proselytes. We are dealing with a system, a principle. And this is doubly unhistorical. It contradicts the Apostle's consciousness that he had been called to be the Apostle to the Gentiles. But it also contradicts the agreement into which he had entered at Jerusalem, and which not only conferred a right but imposed an obligation.

The author of the Acts, as these indications also show, was so remote from the events he relates, that he cannot be accepted as a witness of the first rank. Various features of the present book, as well as of the third Gospel which is so closely related to it, assign him to the second century of our era, to a time therefore considerably after the events. But since, besides the letters of Paul, we have as good as no written memorial except the Acts for the history of the period, the latter must remain invaluable, even if it involved nothing but a tradition handed down to the writer and his view of it. But this is not the state of the case. What he reports consists not merely in oral tradition and the current conception



of a Christian of his date. It is clear, rather, that he was a pains-taking writer of history, and employed written authorities of the first rank, sketches from the very life. Of course, he was not a pure investigator—he was not an investigator at all, in the strict sense,—but he was a historian after the manner of his time and culture, who, apart even from his particular and for him all-determining conceptions, did not merely set out to report what was true and certain, but also to work everything within his reach into a complete narrative. That was his task, candidly avowed and pursued. The actual value of his matter is still immeasurable; only the matter has to be expiscated.

That he employed written authorities is, generally speaking, supported at the outset by the circumstance that a number of the narratives contain names and facts which, of themselves, have the appearance of a solid stratum imbedded in the work. But, further, the theory that these had been transmitted in writing is strengthened when we observe that the statements are in part colourless, that the persons and actions do not typify a class or a general conception. It is characteristic of oral tradition that, even where it does not expand its material into the legend proper, it yet preserves and moulds only what serves to express its belief regarding the past, or has, on the other hand, a proverbial value. Nor is the Acts without such features; we have only to recall the narrative of Paul's residence in Athens. But in other cases, as, *e.g.*, in the narratives of Thessalonica, Corinth, and Ephesus, we have details which have no such value, either in themselves, or in connection with anything else. In the forefront of the phenomena which support the theory of written sources, are the statements concerning particular journeys, in which the precision of the course of events, the enumeration as a whole of places and of subsidiary circumstances indifferent in themselves, goes beyond what would be remembered in oral tradition, and has no other value than that of the simple facts. This is undoubtedly in the style of written notes. And precisely at this point the decisive proof is added, for the author has himself preserved the

form of his source, by letting its original writer speak in the first person as participating in the experiences recorded.

This places the existence of a written source of the first rank beyond all doubt. It is three times employed in the form just described. It makes its appearance first at xvi. 10, just after Paul has been summoned in a vision at Troas to go over to Macedonia. 'After he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, since we concluded that God had called us. . . .' The narrative goes on in this form until the stay in Philippi, and leaves off in a way that shows us clearly, not only a change in the mode of expression, but the departure of the author from his authority. It began without any introduction. Now, at xvi. 17, it is abandoned abruptly, right in the middle of a narrative. While up to this Paul himself has been included in the 'we' of the narrator, the language changes suddenly at the words: 'she (the soothsayer) followed Paul and us;' and from this point onwards the third person alone is used, referring for a time to Paul and Silas. The break in xvi. 17 shows us that the author of the book gives us now his own description of events, although it is probable that the source he has been using contained besides xvi. 19. The whole of the history which follows, of incidents in Macedonia, Athens, Corinth, and later in Ephesus, avoids this form, nor is there anything to suggest that the authority was still being used, though in the third person. It is not until Paul recrosses from Hellas by Macedonia to Troas, that (xx. 5) the 'we' suddenly recurs, and quite as abruptly as before. 'But these went before, and waited for us in Troas.' From this point it is employed consistently throughout the whole of the rest of the journey from Troas to Jerusalem. But then it disappears completely, as it had done at xvi. 18, in the course of the narrative of Paul's meeting with James. It is dropped, as in the earlier instance, with the phrase, 'on the day following Paul went with us to James.' It is to be noted, besides, that in the series of narratives contained in this section, one passage—xx. 16-38—stands apart, which gives the meeting of Paul with the elders of Ephesus at Miletus and

his address to them. In this passage, especially in the case of the embarkation (xx. 38), Paul is alone mentioned where undoubtedly we would expect the 'we.' Of course, the pronoun appears (xxi. 1) apparently in the same connection; but the narrative here merely starts again at Miletus, and it is probable that, owing to the interpolation, something has dropped out that explained the continuation. For the third time the description of events by the author changes abruptly, and with the same absence of any introduction, into the narrative of the eye-witness, the first personal pronoun being resumed in the account of Paul's transportation as a prisoner from Cæsarea to Rome (xxvii. 1), and being retained until the arrival in Rome itself (xxviii. 16), where it is again dropped, and a passage which plainly does not belong to the same document is added at the close. Here also it can be said that all between the second and third portions of the 'we' document, *i.e.* everything between the arrival in Jerusalem and the departure from Cæsarea, not only varies in form from the source, but is also, from all we see, obtained from some other authority. The Acts itself, therefore, certainly fails to justify the opinion that the author possessed this source in a more comprehensive form. If it had extended over the whole period from Paul's first entrance upon Macedonian territory until his appearance in Rome, the author's treatment of it would have been incomprehensible; it is inconceivable that, after a short introductory passage, he should have omitted all else, and only given us, besides, two accounts of journeys made in the last period of the Apostle's life. From what we have before us we must rather suppose that in these records of travel we possess the substance of the source, and that we must fix its real beginning at the point where the second fragment in the Acts starts, namely, the departure from Troas (xx. 5). And since the first fragment begins also at Troas (xvi. 10), and only takes us from there to Philippi, we should probably regard it merely as the introduction, in which the diarist has introduced, either himself, or, it may be, the place which forms the starting-point for the rest. The circumstance that the first narrative takes us indeed to Philippi supports the

former conjecture. And this leads to the old tradition of Luke, the disciple of the Apostle, as a Macedonian. Our information, however, is not sufficient, meanwhile, to enable us to decide on the personal question with certainty. Against Luke we have the circumstance that, in xxvii. 2, Aristarchus, the future companion of Paul from Cæsarea, is designated as a Macedonian, which the author, therefore, appears not to have been. Among the other probable conjectures, Timothy is also at any rate possible, and he is not excluded by the fact that (xx. 4, 5) the narrative mentions him in a group which is contrasted with the 'we.' For there it is evident that in passing to the source there has been a dislocation in the text. On the other hand, the view that Timothy is the diarist would to some extent explain the abruptness with which the source is first of all introduced (xvi. 10); it would then be led up to by the preceding narrative in which he figures (xvi. 1-3). Whichever supposition we adopt, the source was, in its main contents, a record of the two journeys—from Troas to Jerusalem, and from Cæsarea to Rome; and the precision and clearness of its statements give it, as such, a high rank. But it was not merely a travel record, for, after the fashion of such diaries, it has not failed to note down remarkable events. To begin with, the two Philippian incidents—the conversion of the proselyte Lydia and the meeting with the soothsayer—belong to it. Then it includes the narratives of Eutychus in Troas and of Agabus in Cæsarea. And, finally, the last record containing the journey of the prisoner is full of such accounts, both of Paul's conduct on the voyage, and of the events at Malta, accounts which give life to the history. These elements, however, do not merely give the source its vivid colouring, but reveal the spirit of the original author, and give us a glimpse into Paul's surroundings, which is of priceless historical importance. A splendid picture of Paul, taken from the life, is furnished, above all, in the voyage of the prisoner, and another, as good in its own way, in the last journey made by him as a free man to Jerusalem. But the first fragment also illustrates the missionary course of Paul, not only by the vivacity

of its narratives, but by showing the foundation on which the legend could afterwards build.

When we compare the procedure of the Third Gospel, discoverable from its relation to the other two, it is not difficult to conjecture the methods followed by the same author in the Acts. At any rate, his preface to the Gospel may be also applied to the present case, in so far as he may have sifted, and collected, and put in what seemed to him the correct order the traditions he considered trustworthy. In editing the Gospel tradition he has left out whole sections of the material which doubtless lay before him, as well as particular portions which he looked on as repetitions; or he has changed their position for reasons of appropriateness. In spite of his care for chronology, he has preferred, in a great measure, to leave his sources undisturbed in their arrangement, and to pile them one over the other like so many main strata, though at times he has inserted portions of the one within the other. And, lastly, sections are not wanting in which the very smoothness and fluency of the representation suggest that the material has been freely edited by the writer, in accordance with a prevailing opinion or his own ideas. We cannot determine the nature of his procedure in the Acts so well, because we have no longer the Synoptics at our command for purposes of comparison. Yet we have, in his readily recognised method of working, indications that serve as standards for this book also.

The source containing the 'we' portions remains unique. Its expressions may have been wrought over, as seems to have been the case throughout both of the writer's works; the author's language is, with few exceptions, everywhere the same. He puts no restraint upon himself, he does not bind himself to the letter, as is best shown in those examples where he repeats himself, and varies, not only in particular words, but even in features of the narrative. Yet in what is essential the source has evidently wholly preserved its original character. If we start from this ascertained fact, we come across, in addition to the source, a number of other pieces, which do not indeed bear the same individual impress, but still, from the



nature of certain statements and the similarity of the standpoints, suggest a written authority. To this category belong, at least in part, the further narrative of what took place in Philippi (xvi. 10-24, 35-39), then the persecution in Thessalonica (xvii. 5-9), and the adventures in Corinth (xviii. 7-17), and in Ephesus (xix. 23-41). It is to be observed, in any case, that here, in the leading Pauline settlements, the writer represents the relations of the authorities to Christianity as at all places favourable to the latter, and records events fitted to illustrate this. Elsewhere, in chapters xiii. and xiv at least, the narrative seems to be based on a list of places in the order in which they were visited.

But other portions of the book, more or less extensive, are clearly of quite a different quality, and that in two ways. From the hand of the author himself come the greater speeches of the Apostle, viz., the speech to the Jews (xiii. 16-41), as also that to the Gentiles (xvii. 22-31), the farewell (xx. 18-35), and his apologies (xxii. 1-21, and xxvi. 1-23). This is also undoubtedly true, however, of the extremely clear and fluent narrative of events in Jerusalem and Cæsarea (xxi. 18-xxvi. 32). It contains the later speeches, and reveals the free hand of the narrator, first by its smoothness, its freedom from angularity or joinings, but also by statements which either could not have been known so exactly, or which betray their origin in general presuppositions. Here, indeed, the basis was merely the tradition of certain facts, which, precisely because of its fluidity, permitted such editing, nay, more, challenged it. We recognise the same origin, and essentially the same method, in certain freely constructed narratives of the marvellous, as, *e.g.*, the worship of Barnabas and Paul as Zeus and Hermes in Lystra (xiv. 8-18), an incident which reminds one of heathen fables, the deliverance of Paul from prison in Philippi (xvi. 25-34), and the story of the Jewish exorcists in Ephesus (xix. 13-19); the latter representing the right and wrong use of the name of Jesus.

But, finally, we have another group of passages, those, namely, which merely hold their place in the body of the book as connect-



ing links, and reveal by the poverty and hesitancy of their statements that they were simply composed by the author to fill a gap, while at the same time they reflect a habit or a certain intention on his part. An example of this sort is the travel record (xvi. 5-8), with the conception of 'their drawing off,' at the boundary, which reminds us of Luke xvii. 11. So, on the other hand, we have the journey (xviii. 18-23), where a visit to Jerusalem is at least hinted at.

After all this we are not only justified in assigning very different values to the separate portions of the narrative, but we are in a position to criticise the whole plan of this history of the Pauline mission. Although the comparison with the letters of Paul shows that the history is not complete, yet from the variety of its portions it is to be inferred that it made use of written sources, and combined them with the best intentions. On the other hand, the author has also supplemented these sources by connecting links, and has restored whole sections to the best of his knowledge, and with a free use of conjecture, at times developing his narrative in detail.

#### § 4. *Conclusion.*

The plan of this whole division of the book embraces three main sections. The first contains the so-called first missionary journey from Antioch by Cyprus to Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia (ch. xiii. and xiv.); in the second we have the planting of the Churches in Macedonia and Corinth (ch. xvi.-xviii.); in the third that of Ephesus (ch. xix.). After chapters xiii. and xiv., the Apostolic Council (ch. xv.) is inserted on pragmatic grounds, because Paul's freedom as a missionary rests upon its deliberations, but the Acts is ignorant of the independent labours in the Syrian and Cilician mission which had actually preceded the Council. The discourse at Athens is interpolated between the visits to Macedonia and Corinth, as a type of Paul's preaching to the Gentiles. Further, we have the transitions from Asia Minor to Macedonia, and again from Corinth to Ephesus. These interpolations are due to the

author's standpoint, and are meant to prove the constant connection with Jerusalem and Antioch. The history proper of the Apostle's sufferings begins in Ephesus. We have here at least its prologue; and the interpolated farewell address to the elders of Ephesus in Miletus hints also at the gloomy ending of the mission in that city.

The author's whole method suggests that his dates have only a very general value. They are also, in part, quite indefinite, as for Philippi, xvi. 12, 18, *ἡμέρας τινὰς—ἐπὶ πολλὰς ἡμέρας*; for Athens, xvii. 17, *κατὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν*; Corinth, xviii. 18, *ἡμέρας ἱκανὰς*; Antioch, xviii. 23, *χρόνον τινὰ*; Ephesus, xix. 22, *χρόνον*. It is the same sort of thing as is met with earlier (xiv. 3, 28), in the case of Iconium and Pisidian Antioch, reminding us throughout of the method of the gospel. But it is no better where they are definite, as for Corinth, xviii. 11, a year and six months; Ephesus, xix. 8, three months; xix. 10, two years; Hellas, xx. 3, three months; as later two years of imprisonment for Cæsarea, and two for Rome. These are round numbers, which, as often as they recur, only prove a general idea of an approximately longer or shorter period. We must rest content with this, and give up any expectation of an exact chronology.

Apart from the question of the Galatian communities, we obtain from the Acts the same order in the planting of the Pauline Churches as from the Apostle's letters. The Macedonian came first, then the Corinthian, and lastly the Ephesian. Of the journeys in which the Acts describes the course of Paul's labours, two are confirmed by the letters. The one from Macedonia to Corinth by Athens is guaranteed in detail by 1st Thessalonians; that from Ephesus at the close of his labours there to Hellas by Macedonia is substantially supported by 2nd Corinthians. On the other hand, we cannot find in Paul any trace of Acts xviii. 18-23, a record of travel to which not only this, but several material objections arise. According to it Paul left Corinth to go to Syria, visited Ephesus for a short time merely in passing, proceeded next to Cæsarea, and thence 'went up, greeted the Church, and then went down to Antioch.' There he made an indefinite yet con-

siderable stay, and afterwards passed through Galatian territory and Phrygia, where he 'strengthens the disciples,' and not till then he made a prolonged stay at Ephesus. From these condensed statements our first inference is that the author looked upon the great missionary journey, which had brought the Apostle to Macedonia and Corinth, as having closed in the manner just described. He makes him return to his starting-point mentioned in xv. 40, *i.e.* Antioch, and, in fact, because it was the place, as the prolonged stay proves, where his home was permanently situated. This view does not combine well with the Pauline letters. Syria was indeed the field of his first lengthened labours, but it is no longer mentioned in the second period. Paul's sphere was in the four provinces of Galatia, Macedonia, Achaia, and Asia; Syria is no longer forthcoming, even in so important a matter as the collection for Jerusalem. The conception that it was still his headquarters and starting-point is irreconcilable with this silence. The second point is that the Acts hints also at a visit to Jerusalem, made by the Apostle just before his return home to Antioch. For we cannot understand the 'going up' of districts in Cæsarea; and 'the greeting of "the Church,"' without qualification, can hardly refer to any other than that of Jerusalem. It is only an obscure hint, for it is evident that no information existed concerning it; but the author cannot conceive that Paul should have been so near Jerusalem without visiting the Church there. Only, this very idea is negatived by Paul's own writings. His experience in Antioch necessarily kept him away from Jerusalem; and the whole of his last journey, with its collection, would lose its true historical significance if any such intercourse had taken place as is here suggested. The only intercourse conceivable at this time is that which, according to Gal. ii. 10, promoted the contributions to Jerusalem. Indeed, the Acts itself negatives the meeting by its later account of Paul's arrival in the city, and the disposition shown towards him by the Church there. The third doubt arises from the visit to Galatia and Phrygia, which can scarcely be more than a guess at the route to Ephesus. The whole section is there-

fore destitute of historical value. Our conclusion has, however, a further and general significance. For it is precisely from this section that there has arisen the division of the whole period into the three great missionary journeys,—a division, besides, which is based on the opinion that Paul continued to maintain his seat at Antioch, and always started again, at least relatively, from Jerusalem. Apart from the unhistorical character of the latter view, it is however clearly wrong to represent the Apostle as making such journeys from a fixed place of residence. The truth is, that even if we leave out of the question his present relations to Syria, his life at the time mainly consisted in travelling about, interrupted not by a return to any home, but merely by longer residences at the chief centres of his labours. We ought not to speak of two great missionary journeys, but of a Macedonian, a Corinthian, and an Ephesian period.

The comparison of our sources for this section of the history introduces us also at once into its course and its actual contents. The aim and the achievement of Paul was to plant Christianity among the Greeks. Not only did he translate it into their language, he also showed himself equal to the demands of Greek culture. In spite of its Jewish foundations, he developed a mode of thought capable of arresting and conquering even on Greek ground. Under his eyes, and as if under his hand, the Greek mind then, for the first time, learned to regard freedom from the gods as the watchword of free thought, and the same mind gave to communion with God the form of an unrestrained ecstasy. Paul subdued both tendencies, without diminishing the attracting force of the gospel, and the corresponding bent of this national spirit. It was only when he reached Greek soil that the matured powers, acquired in his previous campaigns as a preacher among the Gentiles, attested themselves in victory after victory. And we find him soon surrounded by companions in his work, a number of resolute and highly gifted men of the most diverse origin, who by themselves were a sufficient pledge that his lifework could not perish.

But all this is only the one side of that pregnant page of history; the other is the gradual deliverance from Judaism. It is here that our authorities diverge. The Acts tells us that the Jews everywhere met the Apostle with resistance and hostility, while in the same breath it alleges that he always turned to them first. The tumults and persecution due to their hostility we may also learn from the letters. But it was in another relation that Judaism interfered with his plans. It was now Christian Judaism which, sending its emissaries from Jerusalem, and finding everywhere in the Diaspora and among the proselytes congenial allies, sought to block his path and destroy his work. Step by step he had to fight this enemy; he had therefore to contest almost every inch of ground twice over. The cause itself, though at times apparently menaced with destruction, only gained in purity from its trials. But the history of the Gentile Church thus became also the history of Judaism.



## CHAPTER II

### GALATIA

#### § 1. *The Planting of the Church.*

WHEN Paul wrote the letter to the Galatians he had already been twice in Galatia preaching the gospel, for he recalls (iv. 13) a time when he had preached among them as having been the first (cf. iv. 18).

Whatever may have been the Churches in Galatia to which he wrote, there is no doubt that their members had formerly been heathens. He speaks directly of the fact in only one place (iv. 8). But his language is quite unequivocal: 'at that time, not knowing God, ye served them which by nature are no gods.' Conversely, in referring to his own earlier religion, he says (i. 14): 'I surpassed in Judaism many of my comrades in my own race, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers.' He thus speaks of *his* race, *his* fathers: in these respects the Galatian Christians and himself had nothing in common. He therefore (i. 13, 14, ii. 14) also emphasises the term Judaism. It was a matter alien to his readers. And besides, the latter were certainly not Jews, because they were inclined to have themselves circumcised for the first time. It is true he warned them that if they kept the Jewish feasts they were thus returning into bondage to the weak and beggarly elements of the world (iv. 9). But he did not mean to say that they were relapsing into their old religion; the new faith which they were prepared to adopt was only put on the same footing as the old; and thus this Judaism of theirs was

condemned, since its service was not ranked any higher than heathenism (cf. iv. 3). The same thing holds good of the proof (iii. 22-25) that the Scripture had included all under sin, and that 'before faith came we were kept under the law,' which only means that by the Scripture, whose judgment was alone conclusive, the Jews as well as the heathens were to be looked upon as sinners, until they received another salvation. But the law was at the same time applied to the heathen, because it was the universal ordinance of God for this whole epoch (cf. iii. 13 f.). And although these dogmatic reflections on Judaism and heathenism, and on Jews and heathens, might suggest a doubt, yet we must decide the question by those expressions that state the fact of the earlier condition of these people without any obscurity. We are not even justified in supposing a mixed community, the existence of a considerable Jewish element. If any such ever existed, it was a vanishing quantity. The Apostle has nowhere taken it into account; at the most, in iii. 28, he perhaps hints at it.

Paul had not come to these heathens with the deliberate intention of staying and proclaiming the gospel in their midst. 'You know,' he reminds them (iv. 13 f.), 'how in consequence of bodily weakness I preached the gospel among you at the first. Then you did not despise or reject the trial presented to you in my flesh.' We can only explain these words to mean that he had been overtaken on his journey by an illness which had compelled him to spend a considerable time with them. What follows points to a disease of the eyes (iv. 15). It is not a figure of speech for devotion in general. We may speak indeed of 'sacrificing our eyes for some one,' but not of plucking them out in order to give them to him. It is on this that Paul lays stress. And therefore we have the additional clause: 'if it had been possible.' Paul took advantage of this compulsory delay. The hospitality he experienced he returned, giving the best he had. And with what a success! Even after the long time that had elapsed, his heart glows at the recollection, and in language brimful of emotion he describes the eager welcome he had met with; they did not

despise him in his infirmity, they did not turn away in disgust or horror at his sickness. 'You received me as an angel, even as Christ Jesus. You would have plucked out your eyes to give them to me.' The more wretched his bodily state, the more wonderful would seem to them the mind revealed in his words. They spoke of the blessedness they experienced from the truths he revealed to them. And as they welcomed him, so in turn they received from him. They did not end with extolling the Spirit that spoke through him. Soon the Spirit found voice in them: 'You have received the Spirit by the hearing of the faith' (iii. 2). 'You have experienced great things' (iii. 4). 'God has supplied you with the Spirit, and wrought miraculous powers in you' (iii. 5). 'God had also sent the Spirit of His Son into their hearts, that they might be able to invoke him as Father' (iv. 6.) 'Ye were running well' (v. 7). Such are the memories with which he confronts them.

From these reminiscences we obtain an idea of the language which excited this stormy movement, and created this extraordinary beginning. He had said to them that their gods possessed no quality that was truly divine, that to serve them was to be slaves (iv. 8), to be in a state of ignorance and uncleanness; for they were really in bondage to the elements of the world, weak and beggarly elements (iv. 3). He taught them to know God, and it dawned upon them that God knew them (iv. 9). He told them that they were to be sons of God (iv. 5), that there was a means of obtaining this relationship, viz., the faith to which the unfailing promise of God belonged. For God had seen that the fulness of the time had come (iv. 4), and had sent His Son into the world, born as man, born of a woman, and placed under the law that overshadowed mankind. But the secret of His being sent was His death, the great sacrifice for the sins of men. It was the will of God, in His fatherly affection to men, that He should thus deliver them from all the evil of this present evil world (i. 4, iii. 13). And therefore Paul had made the crucifixion and all it meant so manifest to them, that he can speak of it as having been depicted before their eyes (iii. 1). By faith in it, therefore, their slavery was

destroyed (iv. 5 f.), the uncleanness and ignorance removed; thus they became sons of God, and God sent His Spirit into their hearts. The proof of the presence of the Spirit was, that they were able to call on God, with absolute certainty that He was their Father; they could cry out 'Abba,' *i.e.* Father. And the gift was made to all alike. There was no distinction. In this they were as one man. 'There is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, man nor woman; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus' (iii. 28, v. 6).

It is not possible everywhere to decide exactly which of the tenets laid down in our letter regarding the work of redemption and the death of Christ belong to the first declaration of the gospel, and which are to be assigned to the instruction the letter was meant to impart. But there is no doubt that his first discourses contained the essence of the matter. His earliest teaching was not confined to instructions in the nature of God, and the nothingness of the gods, but combined with these the preaching of Christ and His cross. This is proved by the Apostle's recollection that he had at the earlier date depicted the crucifixion to them. His whole teaching as to monotheism was thereby the invitation to enter as children into a relation of trustful dependence upon the Divine Father, and also to make the greatest possible change in their moral life. This was the double meaning of the liberty to which they were called (v. 1, 13). It was, on one side, freedom from the world, they were to be elevated above those things that took the highest place in idolatry, above the wretched state which that involved, and above the law with its bondage. But it was also a deliverance from the flesh, *i.e.* from the immoralities of the former life. The same spirit which invoked God as Father secured this deliverance. The Galatians had been also told from the beginning that the call of the faith was a call to this liberty, and that this faith 'worketh by love' (v. 6). Paul can therefore now say that they need nothing except to live wholly in the Spirit (v. 16). For flesh and spirit still contend in them; but the Spirit who creates all that is good and noble is with them, because they began in him and were directed to him. In the

language, however, which here contrasts the two kinds of life, that of the deeds of the flesh and that of the Spirit, in wonderfully bold and striking lines, we may recognise an echo of that earliest preaching which revealed to them, instead of the oppressive reality, a blessed condition whose realisation the faith had brought within their reach. And when Paul appeals (v. 21) to his having said that those 'who do the works of the flesh shall not inherit the kingdom of God,' it is not indeed certain to what period he refers; but there is nothing to prevent us supposing that the warning was given at his first visit. In any case it belonged to the preaching by which the foundations of his Church were laid.

On the other hand, we must suppose that the greater part of the proof from Scripture contained in the letter, and, at all events, the refutation of legalism, were not included in the first discourses of the Apostle to the community. For the matter thus treated was as yet wholly unknown to its members; Judaism was clearly not introduced till a later date. Christianity, as it was planted in their midst, was free from the law, but not in the sense of a freedom won by conflict and reflection: it was still in the state of untried simplicity. The best proof of this is, that it was not till a second residence among them that Paul first found cause to warn them against the doctrine of the law, or to speak of these things at all. During the first visit there was as yet no hint of discord (iv. 13). And yet he had already, before writing this letter, and it is clear by word of mouth, warned them against, and pronounced his curse upon, 'another gospel,'—one meant to supplant his own (i. 9). This can only have been at his second visit; even then he had warned them against the assumption of legal obligations (v. 3). The influence of his presence had again proved its strength. He had been perfectly plain with them (iv. 16), and their zeal for him had once more been kindled (iv. 18). The disturbance came to an end, and everything moved in the right path (v. 7).

§ 2. *The Opponents.*

In the interval between Paul's first or even his second visit and the date of his letter, great changes had taken place. The bright picture sketched by him of the earlier period, of the fresh full faith, the strong spiritual life of the people, of their fervent relations with himself, and their heartfelt attachment to him, had disappeared. It was overcast by deep shadows. No very long interval can have existed between the two limits. 'I wonder,' he says (i. 6), 'that ye are so quickly passing over to another gospel;' in other words, not only that they had let themselves be carried away so easily and impetuously, but that the revolt had followed so soon upon the beginnings of the work. And, besides, between these two points came the Apostle's second visit. Even then there had been some change. Not that they had ceased to meet him with love. Personal estrangement cannot yet have made its appearance. He says in quite general terms (iv. 18) that when he was actually in their midst they showed him their goodwill, their zeal for him; this must also have been the case on the second visit. The course in which they had been 'running well,' and of which he reminds them, had certainly soon been resumed. It was only now, at the date of this letter, that they had gone so far as to seek 'to end in the flesh what they had begun in the Spirit' (iii. 3). But he had seen cause at his second visit for an earnest warning. Then it was that he, and whoever accompanied him ('we said before'), made the earnest appeal: 'If any one preaches to you any gospel other than ye have received, let him be accursed' (i. 9). Then he had testified, 'Every man, no matter who he be, who receives circumcision is a debtor to do the whole law' (v. 3). He had told them the truth, and, precisely for that reason, the opportunity had been taken to represent him as their enemy, one who kept them from the best course (iv. 16). From this it is quite clear that even then the demand had been made that they should seal their Christianity by circumcision, and that this had been recommended to them under the title of the true



gospel. Accordingly, Paul's opponents must have found their way to the community very soon after the conversion of its members. But they had not yet obtained any real success. They had only caused the Galatians to err temporarily. Once more the Apostle's presence scattered all doubts.

But afterwards a change came. The attempt was repeated with better success. Without doubt it was undertaken with more ample means. Paul speaks mysteriously of the persons who made it. 'Who is it who could bewitch you, you before whom Christ Jesus was depicted as the Crucified?' (iii. 1.) 'There is no other gospel, but only some people who would trouble you, and pervert the gospel of Christ' (i. 7). But we must not be misled by the indefiniteness of the description. He knew the intruders perfectly. There was one distinct individual especially involved, one particularly seductive voice. 'Your disturber will bear his punishment, whoever he be' (v. 10). Paul's information was manifestly quite precise. The identity of the seducer was not involved in uncertainty, but the words, 'Whoever he be,' point directly to the man of distinction who was in a position to dazzle them by his name. Paul uses similar language, in his narrative of the negotiations at Jerusalem, of the highly revered heads of the Church in that city: 'Whatsoever they once were it maketh no matter to me: God accepteth not man's person' (ii. 6). We need not conclude from this that Paul meant here to designate one of these men. But he was certainly one who asserted for himself an authority allied to theirs. And, in any case, it is most natural to think of an emissary from the primitive Church, similar to the deputies who had come from James to Antioch. The Apostle says, 'I wonder that you pass so quickly from him who has called you by Christ's grace to another gospel, and there is no other; but even if we, or an angel from heaven, proclaim another gospel than we have proclaimed, let him be accursed' (i. 6-8). And his words as to 'another gospel' do not merely imply another doctrine in general, but that this doctrine claimed to be the gospel. The only meaning we can deduce from this is, that the intruders

took their stand as possessors and defenders of the true gospel in the narrower sense, *i.e.* of the true words of Jesus, the genuine tradition of these words. Whatever may have been the relation of James himself to the matter, this appeal to the genuine tradition undoubtedly issued from the Church in Jerusalem. The demands made by the disturbers were, of course, greater than those made by the emissaries of James in Antioch. But it was precisely the schism there which had led to the demands being increased. The events in Antioch had opened the way for the Judaistic agitation. The party now replied to Paul's determined resistance, by forcing its way into his peculiar sphere, and by resolving to turn his heathen converts from him.

The emissaries desired the Gentile Christians to submit to circumcision (v. 12, vi. 12). Paul therefore says to the Galatians that 'they are ready to end in the flesh what was begun in the Spirit.' But it had been represented to them by the other party that this was the true end, the necessary final stage of their conversion. They could only share in the great promises of God in Holy Scripture, if they also submitted to the law of that God, and thus became members of His people. It is this that Paul contests and refutes out of the Scriptures themselves. Circumcision was not the only demand set up. They prescribed a cultus, with holy days and festivals (iv. 10), which contained a more seductive charm than the exposition of the Word; for it offered compensation for the heathenism they had abandoned, and the old disposition once revived might easily have found in it a congenial home. But along with this we can still recognise the characteristic tactics of this propaganda in two important respects. The duties which followed upon circumcision as its logical consequence do not seem to have been very earnestly dealt with. Paul finds it necessary, speaking for himself and very urgently, to call their attention to the true state of the case: 'Once more I testify to every man that receiveth circumcision, that he is a debtor to do the whole law' (v. 3). He seeks to enlighten them on the incalculable obligations they incur by taking the step now represented

to them as slight enough. The full significance of his thought is seen if we compare an argument contained in his Scriptural proof: 'It is written, Cursed is every one who does not remain in everything that is written in the book of the law to do it. But it is manifest that by the law no one is justified before God' (iii. 10 f.). But the men of the other gospel, who had come into the Galatian cities, had not shown this serious side of the case. They had recommended circumcision as an easy step—a step by which the goal was reached at once; for by it the man was incorporated in God's people. Theirs was the common artifice of proselytisers, practised on Christian soil. They themselves believed that circumcision completed everything, and, under this idea, solicited others with the zeal for which they were notorious. Still another motive at work here is indicated in the concluding words of the epistle: 'they compel you to be circumcised only that they may not suffer persecution through the cross of Christ' (vi. 12). These words are explained by what he has already said in v. 11: 'If I still preached circumcision, why should I still be persecuted? In that case the stumbling-block of the cross has been taken away.' Circumcision was therefore a protection against persecution. That the proselytisers were successful in their efforts is implied by the Apostle's concluding words in vi. 13: 'Not even those who accept circumcision keep the law themselves.' We can only understand this to apply to the proselytes, who, yielding to the representations that had been made to them, now entered the lists on behalf of their new gospel with all the zeal of the proselyte. We are reminded here of the security guaranteed by Judaism before the law; he who was circumcised was a Jew and enjoyed the privileges of the Jews; the Christian lost them if he was uncircumcised, and thus stood outside of Judaism as a follower of the Crucified. The intruders were able to point to this advantage of the rite. This does not, indeed, apply to Paul and his persecution. We are therefore led to infer that the persecution in question was promoted by Jews who took offence at the cross, but desisted if the worshipper of the Crucified went so far as to be circumcised.

That gave him the 'fair show' (vi. 12). But he who prevented believers from taking so advantageous a step could only be their enemy. 'So, then, am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? On the contrary, what is suggested to you in so pleasant a way is only calculated to exclude you from the truth' (iv. 16, 17).

The efforts of the Judaists were however not yet exhausted. The territory which they invaded belonged to Paul, and it was necessary for them, therefore, in order to perfect their conquest, to undermine his influence. Their method of attempting this is perhaps the clearest part in the whole description of their movement. The whole first portion of the letter is occupied by Paul's defence, and deals with his rights as an apostle; and the defence is, at the same time, a constant unmasking and portrayal of his opponents. These motives have penetrated even into the inscription of the letter. Even there he is not content with naming himself an apostle, but he also adds how he had and how he had not become one (i. 1). He is not an apostle, an ambassador of men; he has neither come from them nor been appointed by them, but by Jesus Christ and God Himself. His whole knowledge, as well as his mission, is referred immediately to Christ and His revelation. To this is added the evidence of his warrant: how he had obtained everything through the special revelation, and needed no additional help of men for his vocation; how, in a critical hour, the primitive Apostles had recognised his calling and his independence; how he had maintained the latter in its full effect in the dispute with them as to the consequences of his principles. In all this he means to establish what had been contested, namely, his apostolic independence, but also the truth and reliability of his teaching. We can make out with perfect precision the allegations by which the attempt was made, both to undermine his authority in the Churches, and to procure admission for another gospel. These were, that he could not have been an Apostle at all without instruction and a commission from the primitive Apostles, that he had to submit to the limitations and

regulations imposed on his mission to the Gentiles by the authorities in Jerusalem, and that he had been prevented from transgressing them in Antioch. To this whole perversion of the facts was added a malicious and false charge, which was, to a certain extent, the necessary complement of what had gone before. If in Jerusalem and Antioch he had found it necessary, according to this view, to submit to the law, then it was worth while to explain how, in spite of this, he appeared again in Galatia upholding entirely different principles and denying his subordination. And the explanation given was that he was wholly unreliable, that his language was everywhere governed by expediency, and that in his speeches he always humoured those with whom he had to do at the time, whether they were Jews or Gentiles. If, then, he had spoken to the Gentiles in the province of Galatia merely of faith without law, they were not to suppose that he did this everywhere; elsewhere, among Jews, he was in the habit of saying quite the opposite. Therefore Paul, in his turn, adds to the curse pronounced upon the preachers of another gospel these words (i. 10): 'Is that now persuading men, or God? or am I seeking to please men?' Again he says, in reply to the disturber of the Galatian Churches: 'But I, brethren, if I still preached circumcision, why should I still be persecuted?' There he repeats the very words of his opponents. Fully roused by their calumnies, he casts the accusation in their teeth (iv. 17) that their apparent zeal for the welfare of the Christians cloaked the basest egotism; and finally (vi. 12 f.) he adds: 'that they merely please others and exalt themselves, but in any case seek to escape all the dangers of the religion of the cross.'

The agitation was not unattended by success. From vi. 12 we must conclude that the preachers of the new gospel obtained a few proselytes here and there; for in that verse Paul describes how they trifled with the law as regards their own conduct, but took part in the agitation all the more eagerly. It is not the Church in the mass of which he thus speaks. To it apply his words: 'I tell you, as soon as you accept circumcision' (v. 2),

'they wish you to do so, they are forcing you to it' (vi. 12 f.); in none of these phrases is the fact referred to as already accomplished. He expresses himself similarly about the law: 'Tell me, ye who desire to be under the law' (iv. 21). In one direction, however, the evil tendency had evidently made further progress they had begun to observe holy days and festivals (iv. 10). And the extreme development of the mischief must have been near enough. The new emissaries had gained a credulous hearing for their form of gospel, or he could not have said: 'I wonder that ye are so quickly passing over to another gospel' (i. 6). 'Who has bewitched you?' (iii. 1.) 'Do you desire to end in the flesh?' (iii. 3.) 'Have you experienced so great a thing in vain?' (iii. 4.) 'I could wish to be present with you, to make the attempt in new tones; I know not how to attack the difficulty you present me with' (iv. 20). 'I am again in travail with you, till Christ be formed in you' (iv. 19). 'Who did hinder you from obeying the truth?' (v. 7.) Yet these words of fear and anxiety alternate everywhere with expressions of confidence and hope. 'Stand fast, and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage' (v. 1). 'I have confidence toward you in the Lord that you will be none otherwise minded' (v. 10).

### § 3. *The Admonition.*

The Apostle entered the lists against the danger with a letter in which he neither spares the opposition nor attempts to conciliate them, but speaks out unreservedly, and indeed sternly and harshly. He not only declares that confidence in the law and its righteousness is irreconcilable with faith in Christ, but he says absolutely that he who accepts circumcision, and by that means comes under the law, ceases to have any part in Christ. From that moment Christ no longer helps him. 'He has done with Christ, fallen away from grace' (v. 4). This applies to the Gentiles. But he also demands for faith in Christ the recognition of a fact which completely disallows adherence to the law on the



part of the Jews. All who begin with the works of the law are, according to Scripture, under the curse. Even the Jew must recognise that the day of the law is entirely past. He only becomes a child of God in the faith when he ceases to be a slave. But the strongest possible objection to the observance of the law is involved in the fact that its festivals are placed absolutely on a level with the heathen cultus, as a subjection to nature. And this is to pronounce its condemnation.

From this it is self-evident that, in the Apostle's teaching, the adoption of the law could not be necessary for moral purposes. There is nothing to show us definitely whether his opponents in the present dispute, taking advantage, it may be, of existing abuses, had set up the law as the only means of securing holiness. Such a thing was always likely enough. Nor has Paul, on his part, overlooked this side of the question. Even if his opponents did not give him cause for referring to it, yet the news brought him of the state of matters in the Church did. The particulars to be deduced from his exhortations are limited to a few traits. Quarrels of a passionate nature are indicated in the words, 'if ye bite and devour one another' (v. 15). Vanity, the giving of provocation, envy, unreasonable judgments, implacability, were to be deplored (v. 26-vi. 5). A separate additional charge is made, that men who lived in the service of the gospel had reason to complain of a meagre support, of niggardliness, an evil apparently to be explained by the intrusion of the alien doctrine, and perhaps directly instigated by the opposition. The Apostle touches on details only briefly and in passing. He insists all the more strongly upon the important and central aspects of the question, and opposes the delusion that the freedom given by the gospel is a freedom from moral obligations (v. 13-vi. 10). What in Christ is of worth is indeed the faith which works by love. The liberty of the gospel does not mean 'the open door of the flesh,' but the power of the Spirit. Of the law there is no need, for all its moral requirements are summed up in the love of our neighbour. He who is impelled by the Spirit is not under the law. And the Apostle therefore

gives, along with the great principle of love, a concise sketch of the lofty and pure dispositions which, as the fruits of the Spirit, guarantee conduct in conformity with the Divine will—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, self-denial. What more has the law to say, what charge to make, where such fruits are to be found? He who is impelled by the Spirit of God is not under the law; it is not necessary for him to begin by submitting to it. Now the present state of the Christian is indeed not perfect; on the contrary, the Spirit still strives with the flesh, and among the fruits of the flesh enumerated by the Apostle many may have been selected from the actual life of the Church. Those he mentions are fornication, impurity, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, enmities, strife, jealousy, passionate anger, intrigues, divisions, sectarianism, envy, drunkenness, gluttony. And he anticipates the insinuation that his list of extant evils proved the necessity of introducing and setting the law in operation. They did not need the law in order to condemn such things. He had himself done so consistently from the very beginning, telling them that they who were guilty of such conduct would not inherit the kingdom of God. Although he had not opposed the law to the fleshly life, yet he had certainly and all the more strongly opposed the Spirit to it, and by doing so condemned all such conduct. And it was not merely condemnation with which the old life had been confronted; the obligation and the resolve already existed, and did not first need the law to create them. For these they had acknowledged without the law, which was now being recommended to them for their sake. They had plighted themselves to Christ Jesus, and this involved, according to the deeper meaning of His crucifixion, their having crucified, or, in other words, condemned the flesh with its passions and lusts. Only by this means had it been possible to attain the new life in Christ. It was therefore alone of consequence to comply with this obligation, or to carry out what they had undertaken in their confession of Christ. Nothing more was required. For the rest, the Apostle indicates quite clearly that the charges against members

of the Church were by no means all established, or, at least, established to an extent to justify expulsion. The truth was rather that a critical spirit had been awakened, and this made it very necessary to exhort them to self-examination. And so also the estrangement from their teachers, the denial of what was due them, was only too well grounded on a mean and worldly disposition that was eager to grasp at any pretext.

In this very section, however, the tone of the Apostle, in spite of all the earnestness of his exhortations, is in the main much more composed. In spite of the fact that the losses and sins of the Church must have strained the position, in spite of the actual existence of the above defects, the Church itself plainly rested on a firm foundation, and Christianity was rooted in common life. And the Apostle's ultimate confidence is still more prominent in his autograph postscript. There he says little of his opponents' success, more of their false intentions and mean motives. There he plainly presupposes his own perfect right to do what others were only beginning to attempt, namely, to boast of his work in Galatia. But he will not. He can only boast in the cross of Christ, which makes him certain of the new reign of the Spirit, but has also taught him to forget self (vi. 14). Only no one is to vex him further; since he is certain of the cross, he bears in his affliction the marks of Christ branded on his body (v. 17).

In this confidence he cannot have been mistaken. The later history of the struggle in Galatia is unknown. But the victory must have remained with Paul. His work held its ground. That it did is supported by the fact that the province entered heartily into the final collection on behalf of the Church in Jerusalem, and its representatives accompanied him on his momentous journey to that city.

§ 4. *The Opposing Principles.*

These are accordingly the first Gentile Churches founded by Paul with whose origin and inner history we are comparatively familiar. They bear witness to the strong personal influence of the Apostle, and also to the great susceptibility of the heathens. Without directly intending it, Paul reveals, in his reminiscences of the Church's infancy, how powerful the effect of his presence had been when he bore the gospel to them—so much so that this positively became a source of danger. Devotion to the new religion coincided with enthusiasm for him who had proclaimed it, and his influence over them carried them past the point reached by their own knowledge. Hence they wavered, and their zeal abated in his absence, while, as soon as he returned, everything was restored to its former state. Nevertheless the Churches rested on a secure foundation from the very first, and were also evidently closely connected with each other. The letter is directed to an indefinite number of Churches; there is nothing to indicate, however, that any differences existed between them; its teaching and warning are addressed to the undivided whole; and yet the doctrine is not of a general nature, of itself suited equally to all circumstances; on the contrary, it is connected throughout with actual events; and therefore the experiences referred to in the letter were those of one compact body, a fact that at once shows the stability of the Galatian Church. At the same time there is nothing to show that it was under an organised rule. We only read of continuous and lasting instruction, and this points to disciples trained by the Apostle. The letter alludes to the powerful motive of Christian fellowship, which recognised distinctions between slave and freeman, man and woman, as little as between Jew and Greek; and the reference occurs in a passage (iii. 28) in which the Apostle meant plainly to rouse his hearers to the consciousness of those blessings of their religion which were involved in freedom from the law. These blessings, therefore, were part of their spiritual life; they formed an incentive to cling to their

faith, and therefore also to reject all that was alien and could imperil it. It is manifest, however, that they had not taken the first place in Paul's preaching and its acceptance. The one God and the cross of Christ had been the first motives to conversion. And these truths had produced an impression through the marvellous nature of the spirit revealed in the Apostle's words and actions. This life of dependence on revelation, this communion with an invisible world, this conviction of the possession of miraculous powers, carried away his hearers. And the Apostle indicates plainly enough that these characteristics were transferred to them. However strictly rational the tenets employed by him in his preaching, and however fitted that was to reach the conscience, yet it is not possible to separate it from the impressions produced by the supernatural and its transmission. The indications given of the moral or immoral state of the members of the Church apply in part to those human weaknesses with which all have to contend, in part, in so far as they involve any special features, to evils attendant on their extraordinary spiritual excitement. Exaltation passed into arrogance. That the habitual tendencies of their heathen religion were not wholly extinct is only shown in their strong inclination to new festal observances.

Into these Churches the new Judaism thrust itself. We are entitled to assume that this was the first field on which it tried its strength. Its missionaries still acted quite openly and confidently, without beating about the bush or use of stratagem; they declared curtly that they had now to present these Galatians with the true gospel, a different one from that of Paul. The soil was favourable for their enterprise. It is plain that we are dealing with Christians to whom such questions were entirely unknown; the matter was still quite novel. And, further, there is no trace in these Churches of a peculiar form of Gentile Christianity, an independent transcription of the new doctrine under the influence of conceptions borrowed from their previous culture and mode of thought. In this respect also the way was clear. The Judaists found their starting-point in Holy Scripture, to which Paul himself had

introduced them, the sacred history which had indeed preceded the mission of the Son of God. Naturally they pointed to Moses and the law—to the intermediary of the Divine Being, and to Abraham, the originator of circumcision. But they also appealed to the gospel itself. It is not hard to discover the central doctrine of this gospel which they proclaimed. It was the doctrine that Jesus had inaugurated the kingdom, but that to have an interest in it all required to submit to the law. But if this was what they called the true gospel, we can only suppose them to have meant that the obligation had been enforced in the teaching of Jesus. In that case there followed, as a matter of course, the charge that Paul was no true Apostle, and the appeal to the mother Church in Jerusalem as the only genuine representative of the true Gospel. This therefore was the unequivocal standpoint of the new Judaism. It had not been the doctrine of the primitive Church and Apostles. They had lived in the free spirit of Jesus, and, thanks to unbelieving Judaism, they had preserved their attitude of spiritual independence to the law. The key to an explanation of the present principles is to be found in the history of the transactions in Jerusalem and Antioch. It was necessary now to solve the question of Gentile Christianity, and these men tried to cut the knot in their own way. If this principle was to conquer, Paul must be overthrown. Hence the attack upon him, and the invasion of his Church.

Paul's answer was the only one possible to him. He had given it already in Antioch; he had only now to complete it. In Antioch there had been no question as to the circumcision of the Gentiles, but merely as to a restraint in their daily usages. The Judaists now readopted the first of the proposals that had come from the same party in Jerusalem, and they pursued it not only in principle, but aggressively and in action. Therefore Paul, on his part, could only complete what he had already expressed in Antioch; he could not but announce his principle that the law had been abrogated, that faith in its binding force, in its saving power, was utterly incompatible with faith in Christ and in grace.



The Jew might remain a Jew, but he would have to abandon his former faith. Circumcision was worthless, as worthless as the status of the heathen; the new creation was alone of worth; it was the Israel of God (vi. 15, 16). Of this Paul was so sure that the whole thing had become simply a vexation, which he was entitled peremptorily to brush aside; it could not continue to engage his thoughts (vi. 17). These words he has written in his own hand. In the main, however, there runs through all his anxiety and vexation, through the strong emotions of the moment, a strain of lofty confidence, elevated above all these petty ways of men. It marks the whole letter. Paul takes his stand upon himself alone, *i.e.* upon Christ. He gladly remembers his union with the primitive Apostles; but still they are only men. It is even characteristic that he does not mention any of his companions by name, either as collaborator or as joining in his salutations. He only alludes generally to 'all the brethren who are with me' (i. 2).

### § 5. *Place and Time.*

The letter to the Galatians being almost exclusively occupied with one subject, it contains proportionately little information about anything else. It gives us a thorough insight into the inner history of the Apostle's relations to these Churches, but of their external circumstances we learn almost nothing. No Church, no companion or assistant, is named, no journey is described. The direction to the Churches of Galatia, the addressing of the readers as Galatians, are the only indications of the destination of the letter. The reference to two visits, and the statement that at the first he was detained by sickness, and thus obtained the opportunity of preaching to them, are all that we hear of Paul's labours. Under these circumstances considerable scope is left for conjecture, and, very naturally, the Churches have been looked for in the quarter to which the name Galatia first points, namely, the district of Asia Minor occupied by Kelts, with the cities of Ancyra, Pessinus, and Tavion. Yet there is no sign of any sort in the

letter that would indicate the people or their character. We can infer nothing, either from their warmth of feeling or their abrupt change of attitude. Of their earlier religion, their extant culture, not a word is said. One circumstance makes the existence of the mission among this people hardly probable; it must, at least, have made its operations very difficult: these Kelts still employed their old language, at all events in social and business life. Paul, moreover, suggests rather (iii. 28) that he is dealing with Greeks. But all this would have been inconclusive if the Apostle's language elsewhere did not indicate that, by Galatia, he understood the province, the last Galatian kingdom, as it had been transformed into the Roman province. It is not conceivable that he should have ranked the country of the Keltic Galatians with the provinces of Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia. Still this would not prevent us from looking for his Churches, of which he himself certainly gives us no precise information, in that portion of the province originally occupied by the race. But there is nothing to compel us to do so. On the contrary, there are important reasons why we should look elsewhere. And here we have especially to take into consideration the list given in Acts xx. 4, of Paul's companions on the last journey to Jerusalem, at the moment of crossing from Macedonia to Troas. The list is undoubtedly taken from the author's best source. It contains a group of the Apostle's disciples and assistants, in which all, or at any rate most, of his Churches are represented; and it seeks to emphasise the representative character of the gathering by stating after the names of the deputies the place to which each belonged. This gathering must have had a special object of some sort, whether to consult and advise, or to secure united efforts. Certainly its most natural explanation is found in the matter which, though not indeed mentioned in the Acts, is distinctly defined by Paul as the object of a journey to be undertaken by himself, along with representatives of his Churches, viz., the transmission of the great collection to Jerusalem. The company thus resembled those bands of emissaries from communities in the Jewish Diaspora, which

used to carry gifts to the temple. However that may be, among the groups in the list, occupying a middle place between the Macedonians and Asians, stands this one: 'Gaius of Derbe and Timothy.' Both were inhabitants of the province of Galatia. In the case of Gaius the city to which he belonged is named; in that of Timothy it is taken for granted. But even if the latter had not been indicated in Acts xvi. 1 f., yet the origin there assigned him would have been probable. His name does not occur in the Antiochian period. On the other hand, he appears as a companion of Paul on his first visit to Macedonia, and was therefore probably one of the fruits of an intervening mission in Asia Minor. And, besides, we can only in this way explain why his name should have been combined with that of Gaius of Derbe. Both therefore belonged to the province of Galatia. And it is that province, as Paul thought and spoke of it, which is represented by them in the list. But this leads us to look for the part of the province in which the Churches were situated in the neighbourhood of Derbe and Lystra, and not among the Kelts.

This is the region then in which Paul founded his Churches. Apart from the two just mentioned, no names are forthcoming from it. In the case of Gaius we have nothing but the name. But it is different with Timothy. By himself he would have been sufficient to signalise this Galatian Church. For he co-operated with the Apostle in planting the Churches of Macedonia and Achaia; he stood by his side in Ephesus, and from that city went to represent him in Corinth. Paul intrusted him with full authority to act as his commissioner, for he was completely indoctrinated into the principles and practice of the Apostle, and wholly to be depended upon (1 Cor. iv. 17). In Acts xvi. 1 we are told that he came to the Apostle on the recommendation of the Christians of Lystra and Iconium; this would make him an adherent of Paul merely in the wider sense, merely in as far as the mission of the latter embraced Lystra equally with the whole district. But the Apostle calls him his beloved son, a phrase that can only mean that Timothy had been converted by him, whether

during his first or second residence there. Paul's first visit occurred, in any case, at an early date, at the beginning of the second missionary period, as we learn from the internal evidence of the Church's history, so far as shown by the epistle. His stay was indeed caused by an accident, but it must then have extended over a considerable time; long enough to establish and advance several Churches. The letter, at least, makes no distinction as to their state of progress between the Churches to which it is directed. They were united from the beginning, and their further experiences were shared together. At all events, the fact that the cause of his first residence was exceptional suggests that the Apostle thereupon pursued other objects, or suffered the interruption afterwards to alter his route.

Under all the circumstances, the attempt to find the Galatian mission of the Apostle again in Acts xvi. 6 and xviii. 23 has been futile, although it is precisely by these two passages that the Apostle's double visit seemed to be confirmed. In the first place, xvi. 6 speaks neither of a stay nor a mission, but only of a journey through the country. Nor can we ascribe this to the brevity of the narrative. For the aim of the whole section xvi. 6-10 is simply to show that Paul made no sort of halt among the cities of Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Troas, because his intention was to go straight to Macedonia. If then (xviii. 23) mention is made later of a second march through Galatian territory and Phrygia (names as before), but with the addition that he strengthened the disciples, there has been nothing to prepare us for the latter statement; and it is probably to be explained merely by supposing that the author, being undoubtedly aware of such a second visit with its results as the epistle indicates, made a reference to them. In the first and standard passage, moreover, we are not even justified in understanding the expression Galatian country, *Γαλατικὴ χώρα*, of the territory of the Kelts. Elsewhere the book uses the word in contradistinction to the city or cities, as, *e.g.*, the rural parts of Judæa as opposed to Jerusalem. And if we refer to xvi. 4, we see it can only mean that after Paul had been

more immediately engaged with the cities named, he merely passed through the rural part of the province. We are entitled therefore to conclude from this verse that he included these towns in Galatia.

From this the question is doubly natural, whether we have not the history of the first visit, and the founding of the Galatian Churches, rather in chapters xiii. and xiv. of the Acts, the section in which the successful mission in Pisidian Antioch, but especially in Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, is related. Undoubtedly this section as a whole is open to the objection that it contains, for the most part, narratives which cannot be accepted as historical. We may at the same time disregard the transitory residence at Cyprus, the favourable reception of Paul and Barnabas by the proconsul Sergius Paulus, and the Apostle's victorious contest with the Jewish prophet Elymas, incidents which only serve to introduce and illustrate the hostility of the Jews and the friendliness of the heathens, especially of the Roman magistrates. Of this introduction of Christianity into Cyprus we have no information elsewhere. The designation of the Cyprian Mnason as an old disciple (Acts xxi. 16) does not point back to Cyprus itself. The Acts (xi. 19) represents the Christian religion as having sprung up among the Jews in Cyprus even before Paul's time, but it does not recur in ch. xxi. to the fact; Paul's own mission there, however, is of so legendary a character that it is not possible to discover in it a historical nucleus. But further, the greater part of the events in the Galatian Churches cannot be considered historical. It is described how in Antioch and Iconium Paul goes to the synagogue, and does not turn to the Gentiles until compelled by the attitude of the Jews themselves. This procedure is impossible in itself, and, especially if we have to take the Galatian letter into account here, is completely negatived. This is however not the only fatal objection to the great Jewish mission address in Antioch; apart from this, it is certainly the work of the author. The events in Lystra are the healing of the cripple and the attempted worship by the enthusiastic heathen populace of Paul and Barnabas as Hermes and Zeus. The former corresponds to the narrative of a



similar incident (ch. iii.) in Jerusalem, and is therefore constructed according to the plan of the whole book. The latter we must regard as a fable which has grown up in conformity with earlier types, and serves to introduce a specimen of the conversions of the heathens. Finally, the section contains at its close the inauguration of the presbyterial constitution in the Churches that had been founded, the account of which is as far from being historical as the rest. But in spite of all this there is a substratum of fact, not indeed in a historical nucleus for these narratives, but in a record of travel wholly independent of them: the journey, namely, from Perga in Pamphylia to the Pisidian Antioch, thence to Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe, and finally by Pisidia back to Pamphylia, by Perga and Attalia to Antioch. The confirmation of the view that we have such a substratum of fact is given in xiv. 6 f.: 'they fled into Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and were there and preached the gospel.' That is how the author introduces and condenses what took place. The omission of the name of Galatia, and the preference for those of Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia, do not warrant any objections to the narrative. Here we have really, in all probability, the founding of the Galatian Churches.

The route followed on this journey is remarkable. The beginning would lead us to imagine that from Pisidian Antioch it would be continued to the north, but it turns to the south-east. The conjecture is natural, that the cause of this change is to be found in the Apostle's illness mentioned in the Galatian letter. Then, for the time, he gave up the rest of his plan, and returned to Syria. In this way tidings of the new settlement reached the Jews, and brought about their intervention. When Paul again took up the plan of his longer journey, he had a double reason for going first to look after these Galatian Churches; it was necessary to establish the Church founded under such peculiar circumstances, and to confront the beginnings of the disturbance. Still, it is certainly not impossible, on the other hand, that Paul should have paid what he considered his second visit on the return half of the journey described in the source used by the Acts. Here we can only set up conjectures.



## CHAPTER III

### MACEDONIA

#### § 1. *Introduction.*

THE Churches of Macedonia form the second of the four chief provinces of the Pauline mission. Among these they occupy a peculiar position. We know less of their history than of those of Achaia, or even of those of Galatia and Asia. They do not seem to have been the stage of any great conflicts, such as took place in the other Churches. The Judaists who followed the Apostle went, it would appear, straight from Galatia to Corinth. Macedonia, therefore, did not become, to the same extent, a stage for the great historical development of Paulinism, for the treatment of questions equally important for all branches of the Church. On the other hand, they claim a different and peculiar importance for themselves. They became pre-eminently the personal sphere, and, to a certain extent, the home of the Apostle. Therefore the Gentile Christian Church developed its method and its character in greater freedom from distractions and dissensions. Nay, Paul himself appears here in a new light. He was not compelled to go out of his way to retort upon Jewish pedants and dogmatists. He was therefore less hampered by controversy, and was able to present his doctrine in its meaning for men as men. But Macedonia was, even in its external aspect, a prominent sphere of the Pauline mission. All our information tends to show that it was the first European country invaded by it. Paul afterwards resided there several times, and kept up peculiarly close relations with the Churches of

the land. Between him and them there existed, to some extent at least, a confidential intercourse, which had its counterpart nowhere else. These Churches, at the same time, afforded him a reliable support in the men who joined him, and in this region he gained distinguished fellow-workers and confidants, self-sacrificing and lifelong comrades. Yet of most of them it is to be admitted that we know hardly anything but the names. We have more to tell of the cities in which the Churches were situated, still it is only to a limited extent that this is true. It is almost exclusively on their beginnings, and again on their latest period, that Paul's own writings shed a clearer light.

Our starting-point is best found in the later period of the Apostle's activity, because it is then that we discover with absolute certainty what the Macedonian Churches had become to him. First Corinthians was written from Ephesus, and, it would appear, in winter (xvi. 5-9). Paul had passed through hard times in Ephesus, but had emerged victorious. At the moment of writing a great door had just opened to him. Therefore he could not leave the city, although there were urgent reasons to impel him elsewhere, namely, to Corinth. He meant accordingly to remain till Whitsuntide, and then to set out on his journey. His chief goal was Corinth; there he would necessarily remain for a considerable time, probably during the next winter. In Macedonia, on the other hand, by which he intended to go to Corinth, his stay was to be comparatively brief; clearly not because he was less attached to that province, but rather because a shorter visit would be sufficient. He would not there require time, as at Corinth, to recover his command of the position, in order to carry out his task. Afterwards his plans were altered in consequence of certain events (2 Cor. i. 15 ff.). These appeared to demand his presence so urgently at Corinth, that it seemed preferable to him to go straight from Ephesus to that city, visiting Macedonia only after he had arranged the most pressing matters, and then returning to Corinth to make a longer stay. Even with this change, the relation between the two visits, the comparative length of his

residence in each place, would remain the same. But his second plan was also changed by events, this time by events in Ephesus. He was compelled to depart hastily, and went first to Troas, still intending to go, if possible, straight from there to Corinth. But he had to wait longer than he had hoped for the news which he was expecting from that city, news that was to decide his course of action; and, unable to delay further he carried out his earliest plan, and went first to Macedonia (2 Cor. ii. 12 ff.). There indeed conflicts with his opponents were not wanting, but they were not caused by the Churches (2 Cor. vii. 5). Here everything was as he had expected to find it. Indeed, in the chief business in which he was at the time concerned—the collection for Jerusalem,—he found a response, a readiness, as great as he could have hoped for (2 Cor. viii. 2). The Macedonian Churches thus made the success of the scheme absolutely sure. And Paul had every reason to recall the fact that this was but the repetition of an earlier incident, for once, in days long past, when he had left them, they had supported him personally in Achaia with the same fidelity.

In the Corinthian letters, as in the Roman, the Apostle in these later times, in his references to them, speaks of the province of Macedonia, or of a number of Macedonian Churches, *αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Μακεδονίας* (2 Cor. viii. 1). Even the first Thessalonian letter points also to such a further extension, when it speaks of all Macedonia (iv. 10). But these Churches were not on such an equal footing as to be merged in one whole, like those of Galatia. We here meet with larger towns, each of which had its own characteristics. The very fact of epistles being sent by Paul to the separate cities of Thessalonica and Philippi shows this. These stood, at all events, in the foreground of the whole. The Apostle's relation to each of them again was certainly of a distinctive nature. Thessalonica seems to have been the more influential, and was therefore also the seat, most likely, of the larger Church. On the other hand, it was Philippi where the first settlement was made, and Paul's relations to it were most intimate. More of its members are known to us by name, and it was from this city that

the Apostle accepted gifts without hesitation. These two are also the only cities of which the Acts is in a position to give us any detailed information. Admittedly it only speaks for a limited period, namely that of the founding of the Churches. But its information is the more important, since it is certainly, at least in part, taken from a good source. The Acts tells us besides of the founding of the Church in Berea. This place, however, takes a very secondary position in the narrative. But the appearance, later, of a Berean representative in the administration of the great collection (xx. 4) proves that there also something lasting was effected.

### § 2. *Philippi.*

All our information points to Philippi as the place where the work was begun. It is not merely that the Acts represents Paul, in a narrative to which it assigns great importance, as having been summoned by a vision to Macedonia, and as having begun by preaching at Philippi, the foremost Roman colony, as it is termed (xvi. 9-12). Paul himself, in 1 Thess. ii. 2, speaks of having come from Philippi to Thessalonica. And when reminding the Philippians (Phil. iv. 15) of their earliest relations to him, he designates the period as the beginning of the gospel. Now this letter, which is necessarily our best guide, was not written until about a decade had elapsed from the founding of the Church. It can therefore only instruct us indirectly, or in details, as to the origin of the Church. We have no earlier letter, however probable it is that Paul wrote to the community more than once. Nor is there a clear trace of any such, for the expression, iii. 1, certainly refers not to earlier epistles, but to ii. 18. The very fact that Paul wrote to this particular Church during his captivity in Rome is in itself significant enough.

But the letter is distinguished further by the rare, the almost unclouded, heartiness and warmth of its language. Even in the introduction, where his glance plainly dwells upon the whole career and state of the Church, he has nothing but a good work to

speaking of; thus it began, thus it would also be completed (i. 6). The repeated summons to rejoice (ii. 18, iii. 1, iv. 4) reflects the glad satisfaction felt by the Apostle himself as he reviewed the past. To this comforting reflection, the certainty of spiritual communion, is added his personal gratitude, which, equally as regards the most various periods, proves the perfect confidence that existed on his side. They had once supported him when he had left them and gone to Thessalonica (iv. 16); it was they too, in all probability, from whom he received similar help again in Corinth (2 Cor. xi. 8 f.). And they have now revived their former practice. They have sent Epaphroditus from their midst to Rome, in order again to give him help (Phil. iv. 18). And he has again accepted it, overjoyed at the disposition that thus found expression. We do not however gauge the full significance of this circumstance, until we remember that Paul had here to depart from a custom that elsewhere had become for him a principle.

Paul did not go alone to Philippi. He was accompanied by Silvanus and Timothy. With them he then went on to Thessalonica, as is shown by 1 Thess. i. 1, iii. 1 f. We have also the evidence of the Philippian letter for Timothy (ii. 19 ff.); Paul intended to send him from Rome to Philippi. 'You know,' he says, 'his tried fidelity; he has indeed stood by me, like a child by his father, serving the gospel.' The letter further gives us the names of members of the Church itself; two women, Euodia and Syntyche, receive special recognition (iv. 2). They must have made their homes places of meeting and centres for the Church. But this manifestly falls into the first period of the settlement. For he boasts of them: 'they stood by me in the fight for the Gospel' (iv. 3). Side by side with them a man is named, Synzygos, whose uprightness is attested, and who, in any case, enjoyed at the date of the letter the highest esteem in the Church. Further, there were other fellow-workers, who had, like the women, proved their worth in the earliest period; 'their names are in the book of life;' among them Clemens is mentioned (iv. 3). To the same category of fellow-workers and soldiers also belongs Epaphroditus,

who had now come to him with the messages of the Church. The explicit mention of these names is enough in itself to show the value Paul attached to them, the strength of the recollection which bound him to the individuals. But what he has to say to and of them is suffused with the same warmth of feeling as characterises his whole utterances to the Church.

But those first days, in which such ties were knit, were not without cause named 'days of our common fight.' In 1 Thess. ii. 2 Paul speaks of 'all the sufferings and ill-usage which we, as you know, had endured before in Philippi,' *i.e.* before their arrival in Thessalonica. And he reminds the Philippian themselves that it was 'granted them to suffer also for Christ, not merely to believe in Him, in the same conflict which is my lot, as once you saw and now hear of' (i. 29 f.). He had still indeed on coming from Ephesus to Macedonia to undergo 'fightings without' (2 Cor. vii. 5). And, besides, the Philippians had, at the date of Paul's writing to them, to be again exhorted not to be dismayed by their opponents (i. 28). On the other hand, this made it necessary to take care that their good conduct should be conspicuous to all men (iv. 5). And he gives the glorious counsel: 'whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honourable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things; strive to reach this goal; for thus will the God of peace be with you' (iv. 8 f.). There is no other way by which they can gain this peace.

The fair picture of the Church exhibited in the letter has yet its shadows also. We cannot determine how far they extend into the past, for here the exhortations take account of the present alone. There is first an extremely emotional warning and entreaty to be united and like-minded, advice which the Apostle addresses to the whole Church, immediately after he has given the first news of himself and his situation (i. 27, ii. 1 ff.). And, because this harmony involves humility and selflessness, his exhortation rests on the example of Jesus, given not merely by His behaviour



during life, but by the renunciation of self through which He entered this life, a renunciation of which His whole history was but the continuation. Now it is impossible to doubt that this urgent entreaty for unity pointed to extant evils; and indeed, we have direct warnings against party spirit, vain imagination, and one-sided self-contemplation. Only it is to be noticed here, that the exhortation and warning merely suggest the common inclination to boasting, self-love, and ambition, with the jealousies and divisions that arise from them. There is nothing in this, therefore, to justify the conjecture that different doctrines and principles, two forms of Christianity, confronted each other. In the later exhortation addressed to individuals, we again find the call to be of one mind (iv. 2). It is addressed to the women, Euodia and Syntyche, and Synzygos is to aid them in recovering the right path. Even here therefore the conditions are the same, and any difference of creed is negatived, if only because it is said of both in the same breath, that they belonged to Paul from the beginning, and wrought with him in his own work in the Church. It is clear that he still possesses equally intimate relations with both. Disunion of a personal sort is therefore alone in question, nor does the exhortation to be of one mind, τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν, imply more. Precisely for the same reason we must reject the idea that these names are allegorical, and indicate, not two persons, but rather churches and congregations existing side by side, one of them being conjecturally the representative of Jewish Christianity. And our objection is fatal, apart from the impossibility of discovering a tolerable meaning for the names adapted to this view. We can only suppose that the three appellations, Euodia, Syntyche, and Synzygos, if not indeed slave-names, were adopted by their bearers after they had become Christians. It is manifest that the Judaistic movement had not found a home in the Church itself, at least in the form of a separate and long-existent party. Nor is this view refuted by the abrupt and even passionate attack upon the Judaists contained in the letter (iii. 2 ff.), where they are not only called wicked workers, but, the term being borrowed from

their own contemptuous language to the heathen, are stigmatised as dogs, and their chief demand is in bitter scorn nicknamed 'mutilation.' As in the Galatian letter, Paul once more designates the standpoint of the party by saying that they look to the flesh for their reputation. He contrasts himself with them; he possesses everything to which they attach a value: he is an Israelite of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew by descent, a Pharisee in his attitude to the law; and yet he has rejected the whole thing for Christ. These titles of worth and reputation are neither more nor less than those of Judaism. But even in this we have no trace to show that these partisans had penetrated to any extent into the Church, or had already formed a faction within it. The sharp distinction in the accent of the Apostle, when, after speaking of these seducers, he directs his exhortations to the leaders of the Church, is the very best evidence that the former did not belong to the Church. The warning shows that their machinations were still spreading right up to this latest period of Paul's life. They must therefore have at least advanced sufficiently near the Philippian Church to make such an earnest warning appear necessary. But yet all that the warning conveys is an indication how they are to judge of the movement. We are by no means entitled to infer from these words the existence of an already long established opposition in the Church.

The gaps in the knowledge we possess from Paul's letters of the beginnings and later development of Christianity in Philippi are not filled up by the Acts; and this is true even as regards its origin, although the narrative of the book here belongs to the detailed portions of its history of the Pauline mission. Philippi was, according to it, the first point aimed at in the earliest European journey, that to which Paul was summoned by the vision at Troas. But what we are now told of the city from an original source is limited to two slight histories (xvi. 14-18), which refer to the very beginning, and consist of the account of Paul's reception by a woman named Lydia, and the story of the soothsaying maiden out of whom Paul cast the evil spirit:

appended to this we have the Apostle's imprisonment and miraculous deliverance. The first incident bears to be the commencement of the mission in Philippi. Lydia is a dealer in purple, who belonged originally to Thyatira. This statement indicates that she was well able to receive Paul, and to entertain him in her house. Paul, however, becomes acquainted with her, by going on the first Sabbath to the river-bank outside of the city, to a place in the neighbourhood of the Jewish *Proseuche* or synagogue, where, not in the synagogue itself, he makes the acquaintance of some Gentile women who attend it as proselytes. To them Paul and his companions address themselves, and among them is Lydia, who is converted to the gospel by the Apostle. She receives baptism with her whole house, and induces Paul to lodge with her. Here her history comes to an end, and it is only in connection with the following short story that we are led to suppose that Paul remained any longer in Philippi. Finally, at the close of the second narrative, after his deliverance from prison, Paul visits Lydia once more, and sees and exhorts the brethren,—the latter being mentioned, it is to be noted, for the first time. This simple and graceful narrative, innocent as it appears, is of very considerable importance, because it represents the Apostle as not beginning with a sermon in the synagogue, the course elsewhere assumed by the author of the book, but only as starting with such Gentiles as had learned in the synagogue to fear God. As this indicates that he is following his source, it is undoubtedly a genuine historical incident. That the Church was composed of converted heathens may be also inferred from the *Philippian* letter, for while indeed the Apostle says nothing of the past history of its members that would directly involve their heathen or Jewish origin, yet he speaks of his personal qualifications as a Jew in such a way as almost to negative the idea that his readers could have shared in the same descent, or in the claims founded upon it. The letter also seems to support the idea that it was women who received Paul and contributed to the planting of the Church, and the name of Lydia therefore deserves all the more credit. Traces of these

sources continue into the second Philippian narrative in the Acts in so far as in its earlier portion it is still given in the first person and only changes to the third as it goes on. Of this narrative, however, only the first part—namely, the meeting of Paul with the soothsayer—can claim to be historical. The girl attaches herself to the Apostles as prophets, and to the women who follow them. But Paul is determined to keep his cause pure, and a word from him silences her. Such complications with superstition were inevitable; but Paul's action is an example of the mighty workings (*δυνάμεις*) of which he speaks (1 Cor. xii. 28). Whether a persecution followed upon this event is doubtful, for the narrative here leaves the source, and the imprisonment is inseparable from the miraculous deliverance from jail, which bears the marks of legendary elaboration, and, further, reveals the intention to put Paul on the same footing as Peter. Besides, the story is rendered impossible by the conduct of Paul; he lets himself be chastised illegally, in order afterwards to secure greater satisfaction. Paul could not have acted so; but such a narrative might well arise, if no regard was paid to the character of the actors in it, and if it was only motivated by the thought that the very first unjust persecution at the hands of the heathen could merely result in the triumph of the good cause. We are left here with the single fact, that Paul, during his first residence in Philippi, fell into great straits, no doubt because of the action of the heathens, and was compelled to fly from the dangers that threatened him. This fact, however, must be regarded not as the kernel, but as the source of the narrative.

### § 3. *Thessalonica.*

Thus Paul came to Thessalonica, and it deserves at least to be noticed that while his misfortunes and dangers drove him from Philippi, he went, of all places, to the capital of the province which had just given him such a bad reception. We are much better informed as to events in Thessalonica, that is, if we may ascribe to the Apostle at least the first of the two letters addressed

to that Church. This question is at once forced upon us by the tone of the first two sections. The first gives the Church the praise that it merited (i. 2 ff.); this is not in itself suspicious, but in harmony with the Apostle's usual practice. But there are here two striking facts. In the first place, the Apostle's language in addressing his readers reads almost like a narrative of the early history of the gospel in their midst, which would be quite intelligible if directed to a third person, but is less so when addressed to those who took part in it. In the second place, Paul speaks of the extensive influence of the example of this Church in Macedonia and Achaia (i. 7), and this would seem more adapted to a retrospect from a distance, *i.e.* from a later period. In the second part of the letter (ii. 1 ff.) Paul reminds the members of the Church of his presence with them. This section also reads like a narrative, and moves from point to point, as if the writer were following a comprehensive plan already thought out. He tells how he had taken courage to come to them; how, in doing so, he had pursued no interests of his own, but simply the calling received by him from God; how he had therefore staked his whole being for them, and especially had supported himself by the labour of his own hands; how he had taken them all individually under his special pastoral charge; and how, as a result of his labours, they had received his word as God's, and were prepared to suffer for it. The impression produced by these two sections is strengthened by the rest of the letter. The hortatory portion (iv. 1 ff.) reads like a sort of catechism, an elementary table of duties. And, finally, there is also room for the reflection that the mention of an overseer (v. 12), and of pending differences concerning utterances of the Spirit such as prophecy (v. 19 f.), that, further, the question raised in a previous section (v. 1 ff.) as to the fate of departed members of the Church, might point to a later period.

But all these marks of interrogation are abundantly counterbalanced by certain conspicuous signs that the letter was composed from the life, and is animated by vital force, signs of a mode of thought and writing peculiarly and genuinely Pauline. This

impress is borne quite unmistakeably by the portion of the letter in which Paul speaks of his relations to the community since his departure (iii. 1 ff.). We find his style in all its individuality in the exhortations, especially where they enter into detail. Finally, the autograph close, so distinctive of the Apostle, is not wanting. Now, if this is established, the facts observed above are seen to possess another aspect. The methodical instruction in the first demands of the Christian faith is explained, if the faith were still in its elementary stage, and if its very novelty involved the risk of insecurity in its moral foundations. Further, the minute and carefully arranged recollections of his appearance and labours in the Church at the time of its planting are also perfectly comprehensible, if we see that, in spite of the Apostle's recognition of its favourable condition, that period was not yet wholly past. How natural, in that case, that he should in this way repeat and continue, as it were, their personal intercourse! And, finally, as to the praise given to Thessalonica for its influential example, there is no lack elsewhere in Paul of passages where, in similar cases, his joy and enthusiasm lead him to express himself hyperbolically with reference to isolated facts, in which he sees the Divine power of the evangelic current confirmed; and in this instance such facts were certainly forthcoming up to the date of the letter. Nor should we forget that the periods of the residence in Macedonia, of the journey, and of the beginning in Corinth, were longer than would at first sight appear from the short sketch of the history which we possess.

Paul wrote this letter from Corinth. He had founded the Church there in common with Silvanus, and later with Timothy (2 Cor. i. 19; 1 Thess. iii. 1-6). He had come to Corinth, however, from Macedonia, where the same men had been his companions and fellow-workers. The letter was therefore by no means merely a personal production, but was rather the joint work of all three (i. 1). And when, in the course of it, Paul has to speak on his own part, he draws attention to the fact: 'We thought of visiting you, namely I Paul' (ii. 18); 'I sent' (iii. 5); and at



the close: 'I adjure you' (v. 27). These three Apostles had come from Philippi, after the suffering and ill-treatment they had endured there. They had therefore first to 'obtain courage in their God to declare His gospel' in the severe struggle in which it now also involved them in Thessalonica (ii. 1-12). They began by seeking work, which they carried on night and day, living by it even after they had gained brethren in the faith. They meant to burden no one during their proclamation of the gospel. Their conduct was therefore wholly different, in this respect, from that which they had followed in Philippi, perhaps because they had innocently given rise to injurious reports by accepting help there. They would not put it in any one's power to say, 'What do these men want?' or to accuse them of insinuating or ingratiating themselves from selfish motives. Nor should any one be able to charge them with a sordid fanaticism. On the contrary, they were as void of ambition as of self-interest; they were content in their intercourse with the people to suppress the proud consciousness of being Christ's apostles, however well grounded it was in their faith. They therefore appeared absolutely without personal pretension, and simply as men among men. They only desired that their behaviour should express a love freely bestowed, should give the impression of a surrender of their very souls, with no secondary object, with no object at all but the greatest good of others. The result was that their hearers, for this very reason, did not receive their word as the word of men, but presaged and marked the Divine presence in it, and were overpowered by the voice of God. And now that they had believers before them, they continued in the same way to devote their lives, without thought of self, to each member of the Church. They had necessarily confronted them with exhortations and charges, but they were still to learn and realise that, even when admonishing, the Apostles' only purpose was to help every one to become really worthy of God, of Him who had already called them into His kingdom. The language which the Apostles apply to themselves in this description of their mission is strong, but such an effect

could only have been produced by a mind and spirit like theirs. Nor are the facts related boastfully, but as something inevitable and inherent in the very nature of their faith. Thus it was possible, with nothing but the plain word, to lead these heathens to abandon their gods in order to accept belief in the one God and His Son Jesus Christ. Thus was it also possible to move them to adopt a life wholly different from their former one. Now if the number of men thus affected was not wholly insignificant, the sudden formation of a society such as had till then never been heard of in that neighbourhood, was at any rate a fact capable of exciting attention and arousing discussion, not only in the city and province, but in those more remote regions with which events may have connected them. Therefore the Apostle's assertion as to the attention they had excited is justified.

All that Paul has told us of his Thessalonian mission implies that the Church there was formed among the heathen population: 'Men tell everywhere,' he says, 'even in the most distant countries; that the Thessalonians have turned to God from idols, to serve the true and living God' (i. 9). The inference is quite as clear when Paul afterwards compares the present position of these believers with that of the primitive Church and his own. He says that the Churches in Judæa had suffered from the Jews who had slain Jesus, and, in still earlier times, the prophets, and that the same Jews had persecuted himself, and still sought to prevent the extension of the gospel to the heathen. The point of comparison is not therefore that the Thessalonian converts were persecuted like himself and the primitive Church by the Jews, but, on the contrary, that all alike had been persecuted by compatriots. Paul had been attacked by his own people, who were Jews. In the same way his readers were oppressed by their countrymen, who are therefore directly designated as heathens by the comparison. The Acts, indeed (xvii. 1-4), makes Paul first appear, as usual, on three Sabbaths in the synagogue, thus converting a few Jews, who became the nucleus of the Church; yet the book adds that a great number of Greek proselytes and ladies of rank join him. Then

the magistrates take steps against Paul and his adherents entirely at the instigation of hostile Jews. If we are entitled to rely on Paul's letter, the first statement at least is historically worthless.

Paul has not given the names of any individuals belonging to this earliest Church in Thessalonica. Unfortunately, in 2 Cor., two Macedonians of great esteem, who had undertaken and been intrusted with the great collection, are left unnamed, and are merely characterised by their qualities and reputation. The one he calls emphatically his brother (viii. 22), thus indicating a specially intimate connection. The eye-witness in the Acts supplies the want by mentioning Aristarchus and Secundus, who (xx. 4) belonged as Thessalonians and representatives of their Church to the company of Paul's attendants on his last journey to Jerusalem. That Aristarchus, at least, was looked upon as a most intimate and trusted friend of the Apostle is to be inferred from his remaining at his side, according to the same authority, in his imprisonment, and from his accompanying him during the transference of the latter from Cæsarea to Rome. In the epistles of the captivity (Col. iv. 10 and Philemon 24) he appears as the Apostle's fellow-prisoner, relatively, therefore, in his company in Rome. The Acts names, besides, one Jason in connection with Paul's first visit (xvii. 5-9). His house was surrounded during a tumult, because the mob expected to find the Apostles within. It must therefore have been looked on as the place of meeting. The expectation was erroneous. The Apostles were not found, but Jason and some other brethren were. The latter were then taken into custody, but were soon released on giving caution. The fact that Jason's name is introduced into the narrative abruptly and without explanation is enough to make it probable that we have here the version of a statement found in some source. Whether this man was identical with the Jason whom (Rom. xvi. 21) we meet with in Corinth, and who is there designated 'a born Jew,' we are unable to say.

Now if this narrative is correct, it presents us with a man who, from the very fact of his having offered his house, would appear to

have been one of the first converts, and also, in fact, a leader in the Church. And, if he were, he was not the only man who occupied such a position. In 1 Thess. v. 12 f. the Church is called upon to recognise those in its midst, whose achievements entitled them to special love and reverence. It is they who 'take pains' in behalf of the Church (τοὺς κοπιῶντας ἐν ὑμῶν), a phrase, as is clear from 1 Cor. xv. 10, Gal. iv. 11, that could be applied to the work of an apostle, and accordingly to assistance 'in the Word,' as well as (Rom. xvi. 6, 12) to that practical service which was necessary to the first gathering together of a Church of believers—in short, assistance in church management. The two taken together belong to the work involved in instituting and maintaining the Church; and when, therefore, the terms are put so generally as in this passage, the meaning undoubtedly embraces both forms of activity. If then we reflect that this very predicate stands like a name at the head of his statement, we conclude that those individuals were meant who first adopted the gospel, and then, as much by their addresses as by their actions, laboured in establishing the Church, and formed its original nucleus. The next predicate, which describes them as presiding over the Church (καὶ προϊσταμένους ὑμῶν ἐν κυρίῳ), follows as a natural consequence. Literally it does not mean merely that they presided over a definite task, but that they had become guardians for the other members, or for the congregation, precisely because they had first believed; and the position of leaders may have fallen to them all the more naturally if they held the meetings of the congregation in their own houses, and with the expenditure of their own means. The next consequence of their position is then given in the third predicate, καὶ νοουθετοῦντας ὑμᾶς. They held the fraternity together, as is suggested in the following verses, by addressing them in words of warning, encouragement, and support, according to the several necessities of the individual members. All this is so natural, and represents such an original relationship, that we cannot fail to see in it the antiquity, and therefore a proof of the genuineness, of the letter.

The Apostle expressly says that even these earliest times were not free from conflict. The Thessalonians received the word with a holy joy, but under much oppression, and the latter fact necessarily contributed all the more to the cause being known in other parts; it excited attention, but also produced imitation. It was at this point that they had to suffer at the hands of their compatriots, as Paul had been persecuted by the Jews. We might at once assume that the Apostle himself was involved in the troubles. But this is also indeed implied in his statements, when he calls attention to his having preached to them, not only with words, but with power and the Holy Spirit (i. 5). And his whole tone, as he speaks of his separation from them, the feeling of bereavement, the longing for return, and its prevention by Satan (ii. 18), reveals clearly enough that the separation was by no means voluntary. According to the Acts, it was caused by a tumult instigated by Jews whose jealousy had been roused by the Apostle's progress, the uproar leading to a denunciation of the Christians as political conspirators. The Apostle was thus forced to take refuge in flight.

When Paul had left Thessalonica he first went, according to the Acts, with Silas to Berea (xvii. 10 ff.), and there, with the synagogue again as his starting-point, founded a mixed Church of Jews and Gentiles. But although the attitude of the Berean Jews themselves was more tolerant, he was soon driven from the city in consequence of the appearance of Jewish emissaries from Thessalonica, who here also incited the people against him. He went by himself to Athens, while Silas and Timothy remained behind for a little, only to meet with him again, somewhat later, in Corinth. Paul himself, on the other hand, implies in the first epistle that Silvanus and Timothy were with him in Athens. Timothy was sent from Athens to Thessalonica, Silvanus stayed with the Apostle. The account in the Acts is obscure (cf. xvii. 10 and 14). The name Silas, besides, takes the place of the Silvanus mentioned by Paul. Yet this does not amount to saying that both names were borne by one man. The Acts introduces Silas as Paul's



companion from Antioch (xv. 40). He would then be the Silas sent from Jerusalem (xv. 22). And the conjecture is natural that the book has here set him in the place of the Pauline Silvanus, in order at this point also to give expression to the Apostle's connection with the primitive Church.

In Athens, Paul was gravely concerned about affairs in Thessalonica (iii. 2 ff.), for he heard that the brethren still continued to be oppressed. He himself had foretold as much before his departure, and his foresight had been only too well confirmed. He would now have dearly liked to return to them, but it was impossible. Therefore he determined, distressed as he was by his separation from them, to send Timothy from Athens to Thessalonica. He must learn whether they withstood their trials, whether they held their ground. Timothy only returned to him after he had gone to Corinth; and his report was most gladdening. The Church had proved its true character. Indeed, it would also seem that it was again at peace, for all its oppression and troubles are spoken of as things at length of the past, and the only duty left was to exhort the brethren to safeguard their peace by their own behaviour.

It is from this point of view that the Apostle substantially evolves the general exhortations which he addresses to them (iv. 1 ff.). The first, indeed, is that, now that they have been rescued from danger, they should all the more earnestly continue to evince their faith in conduct pleasing to God. What this involves they had learned from him in precepts based on words of Jesus, and revealed by Him as the will of God. In those which he reminds them of as containing the main essentials of sanctification, purity in sexual relationships and blameless conduct in commercial life, there is nothing indeed that is not universally valid and purely practical. But in the second of these points especially we already see how a regard for those without the Church comes into play. It is only the recognised duty of man to man, that must be fulfilled by them as a Divine command. This reference to the world outside the Church is however much plainer in what follows. The Apostle explicitly omits the command, so important in itself



that they should cherish brotherly love to one another within their communion. He can do so, because there are already the best accounts of their conduct in this respect. But he does not mean to omit those exhortations that refer to the becoming behaviour which must attract general attention. If believers live quietly, each one minding his own business and following his own work, the surrounding populace cannot fail to be impressed favourably; in that case they occupy an independent position, and may expect to escape annoyance. The excitement necessarily caused by the time of persecution is not to continue. Their religion should not withdraw them from the discharge of their duties as men and citizens. The danger of religious indolence must be avoided, and the world's respect for them be established. This urgent charge could hardly have been written had there not already existed a noticeable tendency to such excesses. In the last and parennetic section of the letter (v. 15) traces of these again appear. Here also occurs significantly the warning to refrain from requiting evil with evil, and that not merely in their relations to one another, but also in their conduct to those outside the Church; they are therefore to overcome the desire for a chance of revenge upon their persecutors. To the same point of view we must refer further the final charge (v. 22): 'Avoid every kind of evil.' And the evidencing of the faith in continual prayer, but in the spirit of joy and gratitude (v. 17 f.), could only conduce to such a peaceful and inoffensive mode of life. But the opposite danger also appears to be already imminent: that voices should be raised in favour of suppressing, or at least subordinating, for the sake of peace and order, the pneumatic life in the congregation, the utterance of the Spirit, and especially of prophecy (v. 19 f.). The prevention of this extreme is however only supplementary to the main current of the exhortation.

But one subject in particular caused the Apostle to insert yet another instructive and hortatory passage in his letter (iv. 13 ff.). And this belonged exclusively to the inner life and faith of the Christian. The question had arisen in the Church, whether in consequence of a death having actually occurred, or in view of

the possibility of such an event, what would be the fate of the dead who had not lived till the return of the Lord? Paul, to whom the question was referred, meets it, first, with the certainty of the resurrection; secondly, and more pointedly, with the doctrine that, according to a saying of Jesus not preserved in this form in our Gospels, at His coming the believing dead would first arise, and that then the whole Church, consisting of those who had risen and those still alive at the time, would be united with Him. But since the question had been inevitably mixed up with discussions on the parousia, Paul replies to these also. Quoting once more, doubtless, a saying of the Lord, though not this time expressly under that name, he says that 'He would come suddenly and unexpectedly, like the thief in the night' (v. 1 ff.). Then he adds the exhortation to watch, in which he loses sight of the narrower point of view implied in the expectation of the parousia, and prefers to contrast Christianity as a life in the daylight, in other words, as a life illumined by the knowledge of the faith, with the nocturnal life of drunkenness characteristic of the heathens. This indeed involves the charge to renounce and separate themselves all the more completely from this heathen life. But, at the same time, the observation also brings us back to the situation and the motives which, as we have already seen, dominate the whole tenor of the letter.

§ 4. *The Second Letter to the Thessalonians.*

At this point our genuine information about the Church in Thessalonica comes to an end. What is added by the second letter is, in the first place at least, to be looked on as providing a problem for us rather than an authority. The fact that the genuineness of the epistle has been strenuously assailed is not surprising, but inevitable. The reason for this is found, above all, in its striking relation to the first letter. Both set us, if only by the names of the authors, in the same situation; Silvanus and Timothy once more appear side by side with Paul. But the relationship goes further. The whole of the history to be deduced

from the second letter is neither more nor less than that derived from the first : oppression and persecution of the believers ; therefore double cause for their following the apostolic doctrines in their conduct, and for watching their behaviour and reputation in view of their effect on outsiders. In particular, the letter tells them they are not under a religious pretext to withdraw from the common work and duty of life. And then it deals with the interest taken by believers in the expectation of the parousia, an interest that has been intensified into an impatient eagerness. In the same way the separate parts of the second correspond in their contents to certain sections of the first, although, as wholes, the letters do not correspond in extent and arrangement. The first section of the second contains, like that of the first, the gratitude and praise of the Apostle for the state of the Church's faith. This is immediately followed by the instruction and exhortation given in regard to the premature expectation of the parousia. Then we have the charge to cling to the earliest apostolic teaching ; in other words, to directions for their daily life. And towards the close we have the denunciation of pietistic indolence. All these portions furnish parallels to the first letter. Although they are transposed, and worked over, yet the repetition is evident. And even what is new gives us the impression that it springs not from a novel situation, but from a revision of the existing text. This is everywhere forced to point in one definite direction, and is subjected to one interpretation. The steadfastness praised in the first part, in comparison with the actions of their persecutors, becomes the ominous counterpart of the future judgment of God, with its deliverance for the one party and punishment for the other. The teaching given as to the lot of departed brethren at the parousia, and the unexpectedness of the parousia itself, develops into a warning against the opinion that the latter might arrive at once. The reminder regarding the moral commands of the gospel ends in the charge to be faithful to the Apostle and his doctrine. The same thing occurs again in the exhortation to work. What is rather hinted at and to be read between the lines in the first

letter is in the other bluntly expressed; and this section also serves to emphasise the authority of the Apostle in precept and example—a purpose for which the recollection of his laborious life is again borrowed from the first letter. If we are to conclude from all this that novel conditions had arisen in the Church, the only possible inference is that a dispute had sprung up as to the position of the Apostle; and yet we have absolutely nothing to show how or by whom it had been endangered. The only matter which is really new consists in the mistaken notion that had been formed as to the immediate proximity of the parousia; and the apocalyptic instruction given regarding it forms also the only original material in the utterances of the author.

Now since to this is assigned the central place, since, further, the remodelling of the first part already points to it, we are forced to see the aim of the whole letter in the desire to impart the apocalypse. And all the rest is simply a framework designed to encircle it with the authority of the Apostle, a purpose also served by the imitation, with corresponding changes, of the first letter. At the same time, the imitation differs in style from its model in two respects. On the one hand, where it is concrete, it is marked by a familiarity, we might almost say a triviality, which is not characteristic of Paul. To give an outstanding example: the Apostle is said to have lived by his own handiwork in order that he might furnish a pattern of industry. In every other passage where he speaks of this matter, as also in 1 Thess., he himself alleges quite another motive. On the other hand, the language is broad and inflated, it is also digressive to an extent foreign to Paul's manner, and that in the very first part, where the discussion turns on future retribution. For the rest, we must not be misled by the fact that in certain peculiarities the style is characteristically Pauline. The explanation of this is to be found in the writer's materials, to which we are the more directly referred by a whole number of sentences reading as if they had been borrowed from the Apostle's letters. There is only one passage in the letter which demands a serious consideration of the question, whether all these doubts

may not in the end permit of an interpretation favourable to its authenticity. It closes with the words: 'The salutation of me, Paul, with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle, so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.' It is in fact not easy to get over this. For if the Apostle did not write this himself it is neither more nor less than a forgery. And yet we cannot avoid this conclusion, for these very words are the mark of the forger. Not merely because their intention is so obvious, but also because they ascribe the above motive to Paul's autograph postscripts as a whole. Nowhere else are they used as a certification, not even in Gal. vi. 11. Paul added in his own hand what he felt strongly moved to say from himself; he sought thus to come before the Church in person, and there is no indication that his concluding words were ever meant to be a seal and mark of genuineness. But the premeditation of a third party is betrayed in this very respect in still another passage in the letter; the warning against inauthentic epistles, such as might mislead, say, to belief in the proximity of the parousia, is only a hypothetical illustration of the importance of this 'authentic' epistle. His charge to cling to his doctrines, whether delivered to them orally or in writing, and the command to punish him especially who did not obey, forsooth, his written words, are necessarily calculated to procure admission for the present letter. We are therefore shut up to the conclusion that this epistle belongs, not to the history of Paul and the Macedonian Church, but to another chapter.

§ 5. *The latest Period.—Retrospect.*

It is only in the latest period of Paul's life that the history of the Macedonian Churches is to some extent resumed. The Acts, indeed, gives us two additional notices of his visit to Macedonia (xix. 21 f., xx. 1, 3). But it does not relate anything either about it or about the last visit, which certainly is historical. Here we obtain much fuller information from the second Corinthian letter. Paul wrote it from Macedonia; his reports of the Churches are vivid,

showing us in what state he found them, and what they were to him. If in his first letter to Thessalonica he spoke exuberantly of their early faith, their works, and their reputation, yet what he had said was now surpassed by the results of his experience and the language in which he described them. It is true that the outward position of the Church was once more like what it had been in the beginning, during and after his visit. He was certainly at the time in great anxiety about Corinth. His stay in Macedonia had added to his troubles,—‘fightings without, cares within’ (2 Cor. vii. 5); and the efforts of the Macedonians were carried out amid great ‘trials of affliction’ (viii. 1 ff.). Their civic existence had necessarily been rendered hard and burdensome; they had become poor, he could not venture to ask them for contributions to his collection. But they gave unasked. He would have been more than content with little. But they had done much more, so much that he could say: ‘they have given themselves.’ They would not lag behind the rest, behind Achaia. As the matter stood, the Corinthians would require to make an effort, if they were not to be put to shame by them.

Thus then it came about that, when Paul sent Titus from Macedonia to promote the collection in Corinth, he was in a position to send with him two companions belonging to that country (2 Cor. viii. 18 ff.). The one was a brother whose services on behalf of the gospel had won for him high esteem; his work was everywhere acknowledged. At the instance of the Apostle the Churches formally elected him to be his companion and their representative in the matter of the collection; Paul had desired the appointment of an auditor, in order that he might be absolutely protected from ill-natured reports. The second companion is called by Paul his brother. His zeal had been already proved on many occasions. He now parted readily from the Apostle, because he entered heartily and hopefully into this mission to Corinth. His mission did not therefore proceed from the Macedonian Churches, but from Paul himself; his personal relations with the Apostle were particularly intimate. But he was also a Mace-



donian; he did not come there like Titus as an associate of the Apostle (viii. 23). All conjectures as to the names of these highly esteemed men are baseless, unless we suppose, as we have good grounds for doing, that they were afterwards in Paul's company, when he travelled with the collection from Corinth by Macedonia and Troas to Jerusalem. As a matter of fact, the source of the Acts mentions three Macedonians as belonging to Paul's suite at that time, namely, Sopatros, son of Pyrrhus of Bercea, and then the two from Thessalonica, Aristarchus and Secundus. Of these, Aristarchus, who remained constant to Paul in his imprisonment, may be the one distinguished by the name of brother; while Sopatros, since he is first mentioned, was perhaps the deputy elected by the Churches. Neither he nor Secundus is named anywhere else. In the Acts, besides Aristarchus, mention is made in connection with the long residence at Ephesus of another Macedonian, namely, Gaius, a travelling companion of Paul (xix. 29). Luke, who is named in Col. iv. 14, Phil. 24, 2 Tim. iv. 11, and who since the second century (Irenæus; Fragm. Mur.) has been regarded as the author of the third Gospel and the Acts, has not been proved so much as conjectured from the latter book to have belonged to the same country.

All that we have been able to ascertain concerning these Macedonian Churches has only served to verify the picture obtained from Paul's latest references to the Philippian Church, and contained in his letter directed to it. After the exhortations, and especially after the tone of the epistle, with its deep tenderness of feeling, a feeling undisturbed even by the passionate attack upon the Judaists, it is hardly too much to hold that in this province we may look for the least chequered realisation of Pauline Christianity, and therefore, if we may say so, for the personal sphere *par excellence* of the Apostle. There is certainly no want of shadows in the latest, any more than in the earliest, accounts given by the Apostle. Those phenomena were to be observed which invariably accompany the dawn of the new life, the gradual initiation into the new principles, the unrest inseparable from the rise in the new

consciousness of a sense of superiority in relation to those outside. Finally, there were elements of discord produced by the sense of their achievements, by the attainment of a position of influence, by the division of authority with its tendency to partisanship. Of internal conflicts of a deeper kind, conflicts between opposing tendencies in thought and faith, we have no evidence. Nor is there any indication either of an inclination to Judaism or of the confusion produced by the continuance of heathen predilections and customs. From no other province with which we are acquainted in the Apostle's sphere did these opposing principles keep aloof in the same way. Only at the very last had Paul reason to fear that his Judaistic enemies would thrust themselves into these Churches also.

But our authorities for their history owe their wholly peculiar position to the fact that they give us so vivid a view of the Apostle in the midst of his work of converting the heathen. He found his first opening among the Jewish proselytes. They were indeed prepared for the gospel in quite another way from the rest. This could not happen without exciting the attention of the Jews, but the latter themselves he did not approach. His procedure in his work among the heathens was leisurely. That was the natural result of the arrangements he made for his stay. He and the assistants who had come with him wrought for their living. We learn from himself that, as was the custom with Jewish teachers, he had learned a trade, and the Acts (xviii. 3) tells us he was a tent-maker. Thus they were able to live in private, and to wait for an opportunity of imparting the truth to individuals. The Christians soon became numerous enough to hold meetings. Believers were found ready to assist, and after joining the movement they themselves took part in teaching the members and inviting the heathen. The separate houses which, one after another, became places of meeting, retained their significance up till the latest period of which we know anything. The men and women who thus served the cause formed the rallying-point. These fellow-workers, converted on the ground itself, became and continued

to be the natural leaders of the rest. Under the guidance of the Apostle, the active life of the Spirit, with prophecy and all its modes of utterance, soon awoke. Brotherly love, the spirit of self-sacrifice, was born. Poor on the whole as the Churches were, they were ever ready to give for the cause, and a determination was awakened that would be turned aside by no opposition, no molestation, no persecution from without. The Christianity planted here by the Apostle has all the features of the Gentile gospel in its breadth and freedom. The Apostle does not draw to any extent on Holy Scriptures; there is not a quotation from them in the two Macedonian letters. But he appeals to words of Jesus which he had taught them. The greatest effect of all was produced by the motives of moral renewal, the bright day of the gospel in the inner and outer life. For as a day shone the pure spirit of the gospel, comprehending and verifying all that was noble in humanity, and the full joy of those who realised that it possessed this significance.

## CHAPTER IV

### ACHAIA

#### § 1. *Corinth.*—*The Founding of the Church.*

To speak of Paul's mission in Achaia is to tell the history of the Corinthian Church. That is not to say that Christianity was confined to the city, not even, perhaps, that no other Churches existed. Paul names the house of Stephanas the first-fruits, not of Corinth, but of Achaia (1 Cor. xvi. 15). In 2 Cor. i. 1 he combines with the Church in Corinth all the saints who are in the whole of Achaia. But our historical knowledge is limited to the one city. The Apostle had indeed been in Athens (1 Thess. iii. 1), but he speaks of his visit as merely a halt on his travels. The narrative given by the Acts (xvii. 16-34) can claim no historical value. The objective element in it, the preaching in the synagogue, the description of the populace, the encounter with the Stoic and Epicurean philosophers, the mention of the altars to unknown gods, bears throughout the impress of an appropriation of familiar circumstances, but shows no trace of actual events. Paul's speech merely reveals the author's conception of his manner of preaching to the heathen. The names of Dionysius and Damaris (xvii. 34) alone point to actual fact; we may assume from Eus. *Hist. Eccl.* iv. 23 the existence in the post-Apostolic age of an Athenian Christian named Dionysius, and it was then an easy matter for the author of the Acts to make him a convert of Paul; he was unable to give any more precise information about him. The decisive objection to the view that the Apostle

carried on operations in Athens for a considerable time, and that a Church was founded by him there, is that he never speaks of them.

We know more about the Corinthian Church than about any of the others founded by Paul. The two letters are eminently historical. They treat of a series of facts and circumstances in such a way as to supply the place of a historical record. For much they are our only authority, for the rest they are at least the best. And even if we had nothing else, they would suffice to furnish us with a type of the oldest form in which the Christian religion was embodied on Græco-Roman soil. But it is not merely a general type which is here given us. Within the framework in which it is presented the history of the Church is full of varied incident and is thoroughly original. And yet all we have is plainly but a slight extract from the whole manifestation of this complex life; and we are still left with a vast number of questions which in part receive no answer, in part only an approximate one.

In Corinth Paul proclaimed the gospel, the tidings of Jesus Christ, in company with Silvanus and Timothy, as he recalls in 2 Cor. i. 19; therefore exactly as in Macedonia, and especially in Thessalonica. This at once proves that the work in Corinth followed the other. He came to Corinth from Macedonia on the same first journey in Greece. This was also absolutely the first proclamation in the city of the Christian faith; Paul founded the Church. On this point he expresses himself quite precisely and unequivocally in the first letter. Others, all others, apart from his above-mentioned fellow-travellers and assistants who wrought and obtained a footing there, came after him and merely took up the work he had instituted. He uses various figures to express this fact. 'He planted, others had only watered' (1 Cor. iii. 6);

He is the master-builder who laid the foundation, others could only build upon it' (ver. 10). Therefore all the Christians there were 'his work' (ix. 1). He was their father, who begot them through the gospel; in comparison with the Apostle all the rest could only

labour among them as tutors (iv. 15). When, therefore, the question was discussed whether he was an Apostle, he only required to point to the Corinthians; they were his seal (ix. 2). And if letters of recommendation were desiderated, their own Christian faith must serve; in his success among them Christ Himself had delivered a letter to him which every man could read (2 Cor. iii. 2, 3).

We know the name of the man who was the first to adopt the faith: the family of Stephanas were the first-fruits of Achaia (1 Cor. xvi. 15). They were also the first baptized by the Apostle. The fact was so well known in Corinth that, in enumerating those he had himself baptized, he omitted their names, and only added them later by way of correction (i. 16). To the household of this Stephanas probably belonged also the two men Fortunatus and Achaicus mentioned (xvi. 17) along with him as having visited the Apostle in Ephesus; from their names it may be conjectured that they were slaves. The first stratum of Church membership was formed in the house of this Stephanas; from this starting-point the development of the work went on; and the household lent themselves to it (xvi. 15). But others must have taken part in the assembling together of the fast-increasing Church. Paul speaks of those who were at that time his fellow-labourers in the apostolic calling (*συνεργοῦντες*), and shared in it by their own efforts (*κοπιῶντες*), xvi. 16. Hence we can explain why he himself baptized only two additional individuals, viz. Crispus and Gaius (i. 14). Even apart from his original fellow-voyagers and assistants, there were soon quite enough to attend to this duty. Further, a Corinthian woman named Chloe is mentioned, along with her household, as a believer on intimate terms with the Apostle (i. 11); and we have later (Rom. xvi. 1) the reference to Phoebe, an inhabitant of Cenchrea, the port of Corinth; she is there called *διάκονος*, the ministrant to the faithful in the town to which she belonged, and in that capacity she became a *προστάτις*, or patroness for many, among whom was Paul himself. Besides these, we find in the second letter a few others who, at



the time of its composition, were with Paul in Ephesus, and who manifestly must have held a peculiar relationship to the believers in Corinth. These were Sosthenes, who is named as joint-author of the letter (i. 1), and designated brother, not apostle; and Aquilas and Prisca, from whom Paul transmits special greetings to the Church (xvi. 19).

The converts were Gentiles; at any rate, the great majority were; to such an extent that Paul could address the whole Church without further qualification as heathen: 'Ye know that in the time when ye were heathen, it was dumb idols to which ye were blindly led away' (1 Cor. xii. 2). And everything else agrees with this explicit declaration. We may in the meantime disregard those distinctive phenomena, which afterwards appeared in the Church, and are only to be explained on this basis. Wherever the letter refers to the origin of their present faith, to the descent of the Corinthian Christians, we see that they had belonged to a world which, though it might have reached monotheism by the Divine revelation in the world of nature, yet had, as a matter of fact, failed to do so. 'For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through wisdom knew not God, it was God's good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them who believe' (i. 21). We may also set under this head the fact that, as he says (iii. 1 f.), he could at first only give them milk, and not solid food, because they were 'men of flesh,' *σάρκινοι*, not *σαρκικοί*; the latter term being only applicable on account of their subsequent persistence in, or their relapse into, this state. At the time when they first received the Apostle's message, this whole sphere, the world of which they now heard, was as yet entirely new and strange to them; they had lived in the midst of quite different ideas and conceptions.

Paul's language in 1 Cor. i. 20, 25-29 about the rank, means, and culture of the Corinthian believers, shows that the great majority belonged to the lower classes, the poor and, to Greek notions, the uncultured. The great commercial city, which at that time possessed a very mixed population of the sort, had contributed a large

contingent to the Church from among these. Yet the Apostle's statements are by no means absolute or exclusive. He only says that there were not many who might be called wise after the flesh, who were influential or of noble birth. There was therefore a minority consisting of the latter. And this is confirmed on all hands; for he afterwards speaks expressly of their differences in rank. His discussion of their celebration of the Supper leads him to mention rich and poor. And the spiritual aspirations which soon became prominent compel us to assume that there were persons who were more highly equipped in this respect.

We have now substantially exhausted the information to be gathered from Paul himself concerning the antecedent conditions and the external history of the institution of the Corinthian Churches. The inner relations, the disposition and thoughts of the population now converted, and their acceptance and appropriation of Christianity, must appear in the later development. But we have now to ask what the Acts tells us about the external course of events. Its narrative is calculated to dazzle us at a first glance by a certain perspicuity, by the definiteness it gains from the names which occur in it. Paul came alone to Corinth (xviii. 1); here he first made the acquaintance of a Jew called Aquilas, and his wife Priscilla, originally from Pontus, but a short time previously settled in Rome, whence they had only been driven to Corinth by Claudius' expulsion of the Jews (ver. 2). It so happened that Aquilas wrought at the same trade as the Apostle, and therefore Paul joined him, and they did their work together (ver. 3). At the same time Paul went to the synagogue every Sabbath, delivered addresses there, and converted Jews and Greeks (ver. 4). Then Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia; even after their arrival Paul persisted in his efforts to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah (ver. 5). A day came, however, when the patience of his hearers was exhausted, and they began to oppose and vilify him; then, shaking his garments and exclaiming, 'Your blood be upon your own heads,' he declared that he was free of all guilt, and that he would now go to the heathen (ver. 6). Yet he was able

to go simply to the adjoining house, which belonged to a Jewish proselyte, named Titius Justus; by him Paul was welcomed (ver. 7). At this point he was joined by Crispus, a ruler of the synagogue, who came over with his whole house; a new period of activity was at once entered on, a crowd of inhabitants became believers and accepted baptism (ver. 8). Paul then obtained a vision by night, or rather he heard encouraging words: he was to persist, and nothing would happen to him. 'God had much people in the city' (ver. 9 f.). He remained there eighteen months longer teaching the word of God (ver. 11). At last, however, the patience of the Jews in Corinth broke down a second time; they accused him before the proconsul Gallio of furthering an illegal religion (ver. 12 f.); but the latter repelled the charge when he heard that the matter at issue did not involve ordinary crime or misconduct, but only a dispute about the Jewish law (ver. 14-16). The Jews then obtained satisfaction for themselves by beating Sosthenes, the ruler of the synagogue, in presence of the proconsul, a proceeding upon which Gallio looked with equal indifference (ver. 17). Paul himself was able to continue some time longer in Corinth; he then bade the brethren farewell, and departed with Priscilla and Aquilas to Ephesus (ver. 18 ff.), where the latter remained, while he went on to Syria.

Now in this narrative there is one main section above all which cannot stand, namely, the entire record of the preliminary and continued mission to the Jews, the failure of which was necessary in order to justify Paul in turning to the heathen. To this is to be added the fact, not only that Paul in the first period of his residence is represented as converting Jews and Greeks in the synagogue, but also that all the individuals in his party whose names are forthcoming are Jews, with the solitary exception of Titius Justus, who is, however, at least a proselyte. From this we obtain a general view of the situation entirely opposed to that of the first letter to the Corinthians. And it is not merely the fact that the narrative makes Paul's supporters Jews which deprives it of credence. First Corinthians introduces us at once

with the name of Stephanas into a circle that is on the whole quite different. Nor is this conclusion disproved by points of contact in the details. The name of Sosthenes recurs, at least at the opening of the first letter, though without any nearer definition; yet the circumstance that the Jews were hostile to him might explain why Paul took him away with him. As regards Aquilas and Prisca, we must start from the fact that, according to Rom. xvi. 3 and 1 Cor. xvi. 19, their home was in Ephesus, and that they possessed a house large enough to form a place of meeting for Christians. Yet it also appears, from 1 Cor. xvi. 19, that they occupied a peculiar relation to the Church in Corinth; this would be explained by their residence there with Paul. For the rest, the account given in the Acts of their stay is neither clear nor satisfactory. It is only their character as Jews and fellow-tradersmen that unites them with Paul. It is not even stated whether they were believers before their arrival from Rome, or whether they were now converted by Paul, still less is there any mention of active co-operation on their part in the work of the gospel. As regards Crispus, it is not exactly evident from 1 Cor. i. 14 that he must have been a Jew. Of Titius Justus we learn from Paul himself nothing at all.

But the narrative is burdened with other improbabilities. In the first place, Paul by his Sabbath-day discourses in the synagogue converts Greeks as well as Jews, while afterwards he addresses himself to the Jews alone, unfolding to them the Messianic proof. Then a single day is chosen as a central point, and into it are crowded: his expulsion from the synagogue, his lodging in the adjoining house with a Jewish proselyte (an act apparently of defiance, and yet at the same time another step in continuation of the same course), the adhesion of Crispus along with other great successes, and the night vision. This is quite the way in which, in the Gospels also, incidents are brought together and artificially crowded into single days, under the influence of a certain pragmatism. And the case is not very different with the two narratives that relate to another day, namely,

that on which the complaint is made against Paul, and Sosthenes is beaten, for the incidents are only connected, in so far as they furnish two illustrative examples of the attitude of indifference assumed by Gallio. And we must add that the transparent speech of the proconsul is in any case the work of the author, and that the story of Sosthenes bears the character of a fragmentary and no longer quite intelligible anecdote. The two groups have therefore resulted from the pragmatism of a writer who sought to exhibit by the one the Divine leading in Paul's transition to the heathen, and by the other the tolerance and indifference of the Gentiles.

Nor, further, are signs wanting to show how the author has combined his varied materials. As regards this we are at once struck by the relations existing between the first and second parts of the Corinthian visit. In mentioning the arrival of Silas and Timothy, Paul's activity among the Jews is depicted without regard to the description that has just been given. This antecedent section (xviii. 1-4), which contains at the same time the meeting with Aquilas, is therefore probably an interpolation, and thus is also explained the fact that we have here in a sort of heading, according to the writer's custom, the premature mention of the Greeks. But we can also recognise in the second section the distinction between the component parts, in the relation of the narrative portions to the descriptive and combining notes of the author. What we are entitled then to refer to a good source is substantially limited to the names of Titius Justus, Crispus, and Sosthenes, and to the general conception of an extensive and successful work. On the other hand, we must give up not only the decisive turning from the Jews to the heathen, but also probably the persecution at least threatened through denunciation by the Jews. For Paul's reminiscences not only contain nothing of this, they rather reveal an essentially different course—more peaceful, or disturbed, at any rate, by other troubles.

Paul has indeed expressed himself very clearly about his own first appearance, the thoughts that moved him, the impression that it necessarily produced. 'He came among them in weakness and



fear and great trembling' (1 Cor. ii. 3). He is not speaking here of earlier dangers and sufferings and their after effects. We would have better grounds for our opinion if we supposed him to refer to his infirmity, of which the Corinthians (2 Cor. xii. 7) were aware, and which for this reason he simply describes figuratively as 'a thorn in the flesh, yea, as Satan's messenger sent to buffet him, that he may not overvalue himself.' But even this is not the meaning; the trembling is explained by the fact that he did not come as a master of eloquence or wisdom, that he was not conscious of possessing the persuasive arts of this wisdom. His description of his appearance in Corinth is a particular instance of a general truth he has just stated. It proves and illustrates the reflection 'that God has chosen what passed for weak in the world, and that which is not, to bring to nought that which is' (1 Cor. i. 27, 28). In view of this world into which he entered in Corinth, he was peculiarly conscious of a feeling of estrangement. He was here confronted not merely by the old religion of polytheism, not only by a stunted or degraded moral sense; the greatest barrier was the prevailing mode of thought, the spiritual atmosphere, the habit of judging everything according to the form, the rhetoric, and the dazzling dialectic with which it was presented, the habit of accepting nothing, of even being willing to hear nothing, which did not respond to these demands. In short, Paul was confronted by a corrupt taste. And precisely because to this mental attitude the form was everything, there was a lack of receptivity for the matter, and especially of a capacity for deeper and more lasting impressions. It was this and nothing else which produced the Apostle's feeling. We may assume that in his present frame of mind he undervalued his own efforts even in respect of their form. We know that he possessed an eloquence of his own, even though it may not have been according to rule, a gift of powerful and glowing speech; we know that he had his own kind of dialectic, also different from the orthodox and customary, but astonishing and crushing by the power of its lofty standpoint and unexpected turns. He himself is never tired assuring us that he



was deficient in point of form. Even at the date of the second letter, it still seemed natural to him that his opponents should call him weak in appearance, and should make light of his speech. He expected to refute them by the power of truth and the force of his will alone. He never forgot the feeling of depression which he had to overcome at the outset in Corinth, and his opponents took advantage of it (2 Cor. x. 1, 10, xi. 6, xiii. 3). One thing alone uplifted him and supported him in spite of all his natural anxiety, namely, that 'Christ whom he preached, though the Jews might take offence at His cross, and the Greeks look upon it as folly, was yet for Jews and Greeks, in as far as they were called, God's power and wisdom' (1 Cor. i. 23, 24), and that the evidence of spirit and of power was for this reason connected with his preaching. And he has clearly stated what he meant by the spirit; it was nothing else than the revelation of the very nature of God Himself, by the communication of His Spirit, enabling believers to think with God's own thoughts. In the same way he has indicated what he meant by the other term, the evidence of power, when he describes his apostolic life of self-denial in comparison with the vanity of others, his strength consisting in triumph over his weakness in a moral force of a Divine sort.

With the peculiar nature of the ground trodden by Paul in Corinth there was also connected one feature in his appearance there on which he afterwards lays such great stress (1 Cor. ix. 6-27; 2 Cor. xi. 7-9). He accepted no material support from any member of the Church, although this compelled him to accept it from elsewhere. Here again the Acts has only given us half the truth. It settles the question as to his means in Corinth at the beginning and afterwards, by making him work at his trade with Aquilas. This too he did; he laboured with his own hands. But at that time this was not enough; in any case it was not his only source of support. The deficiency was covered by his acceptance of help from Macedonia. The importance which this attitude of his assumed in his controversy with his Judaistic opponents is admitted in the letters, and especially in the second. They

reproached him with it, he made it an essential point in his defence. But it is an error to seek the motives which at first determined his action in this relationship between the two parties. The reference to the controversy did not come into play till later. Even when he wrote the first letter his apostolic position had been undoubtedly attacked by some party on this account. There he does not say that he had thus sought to distinguish himself from the Judaistic apostles. On the contrary, he claims for himself a full and equal right to act as they had done. But he made no use of their practice. Why? In order not to set up a barrier in the way of the gospel. Who in Corinth already knew that an Apostle possessed and could vindicate his claim for payment? To come before them with such a claim would only have created a hindrance. His preaching might then have assumed the appearance of a trade, and would therefore at the very start have caused a false impression, and set up a wrong standard for its examination. His cause could only create a true impression in such surroundings if he succeeded in showing that he desired and sought nothing for himself, that he could not do otherwise, that an inner force impelled him which amid his poverty had all the weight of an imperative with him. And therefore this very trait in his appearance among them belonged to the idea of his weakness, his voluntary weakness, of the self-denial which must procure for him the imperishable crown. It was for him accordingly an inner necessity so to act. And when he afterwards says (2 Cor. xi. 12) that he declined to take assistance in order not to help the false apostles by permitting them to appeal to him in support of their self-seeking intrigues, the reference merely applies to his persistence in his practice. But it was not his earliest motive.

### § 2. *The Earliest Preaching.*

When we inquire into the Apostle's labours, the preaching he essayed and conducted with such wonderful success in Corinth, we must not of course adduce the whole doctrinal contents of the two

letters. Important sections of these writings impress us with the fact that he is supplying something new in them, a spiritual structure evolved at the moment, created under its necessities, and with the power of the spirit it had excited. Another portion again may well have been spoken before it was written in its present form, but only in course of time, during the first long residence or at a subsequent visit; not, however, in the beginning, in the missionary discourse proper. Yet we are by no means utterly destitute of aids by which we may still recover, at least in its main lines, this latter also, the evangelising address, from Paul's occasional expressions and recollections. In the first place, he refers expressly in the first epistle to historical facts which he had imparted to the Corinthians at the very outset. He says this emphatically of the death and resurrection of Christ (xv. 1 ff.). That was the gospel proclaimed by him and received by them. That he delivered to them first and foremost in the form in which he had received it, namely, that the resurrection, like the death itself, had taken place in fulfilment of the Scriptures, of prophecy; nay, further, that the dead had appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. In the same way he says that he delivered to them what he himself had obtained from the Lord, namely, the words of institution of the Holy Supper (xi. 23). Again, in other passages he twice appeals avowedly to sayings of Jesus in a way which shows that he had taught them these, or at any rate such sayings of the Lord in general; he refers, namely, to the prohibition of divorce (vii. 10), and to the authorisation of the Apostles to receive pay (ix. 14). But it was the proclamation of Christ crucified that came before all else (i. 23). That was absolutely the whole gospel. And he speaks of it in the first part of the first letter, when recapitulating the very origins of the gospel in their midst. It was the doctrine with which he began.

At this point we are met by a peculiar, an almost amazing fact. Now that the Apostle was on purely heathen ground, one would readily suppose that his most natural course would have been to begin by opposing idolatry and inculcating monotheism, only then

advancing from this basis to the doctrine of redemption, of Christ. But Paul adopted precisely the opposite course. On this ground, heathen as it was, he began with the mystery of redemption. The letters certainly also indicate that he early taught the true doctrine of God. Paul defines it as an axiom, which was absolutely certain both for his readers and himself, that there was only one God, the Creator of all things, and that he was their only goal (viii. 6). He refers briefly, as to matters well known and long since discussed, to the truth that there always had been a wisdom of God recognisable in the world, and that the world ought to have known it (i. 21). He reminds them how their infatuation for the gods had once ruled them like a blind and unintelligent impulse (xii. 2). But these whole reminiscences are already entwined with other matter. The only God did not exist for them save through the one Mediator. It was not the unfolding of the wisdom of God in the world that had now at last won them, but an entirely contrary plan, a preaching which appeared to men to be foolishness. The blind impulse to the gods was not overcome by the recognition of their worthlessness, but by a mightier yet more direct constraint, that of the Spirit of God. We can see with absolute certainty that even here, in Corinth, Paul came forward and did his work chiefly by telling of Christ and His Crucifixion. And this striking fact indeed completely harmonises with the sense of his position as it is so clearly described by him. Just because he was embarrassed by his weakness when confronted by the prevailing habits of thought, he sought his strength only and entirely in that which was most alien to them. Precisely here he did not begin with those rational principles that might have paved the way for his gospel, but he presented to his hearers in all its strangeness, yet in all its power, the doctrine of the cross. So even in the second letter he describes Jesus Christ the Son of God to have been the whole contents of his preaching (i. 19). And in the same letter it is stated with equal significance that, on the one hand, his plan was to destroy all the arts of reason by the obedience of Christ (x. 5), and that, on the other,

he had practised no reserve but disclosed the whole truth (iv. 1 ff.). This having been the contents of the Apostle's missionary discourses, they could only address themselves to the sense of guilt and need of reconciliation everywhere existent. Although the point of contact supplied by the criticism of the law and the sacrificial ideas of the Jews was here wanting, yet the symbolism of the crucifixion could produce its full effect. And what is represented in the letters with overwhelming force as the object and end of Christ's death, is the new life of the Spirit effected by it (1 Cor. i. 30; 2 Cor. v. 15, 17).

The second point which we conclude from the letters to have formed, along with the mystery of the crucifixion, the main contents of this first preaching, was the call to enter into a communion, that by its spirit, and the impress of moral nobility which it ensured, raised them high above the common and contemptible impulses of the world to which its adherents had till then belonged. And this offer must have been received all the more readily if those who felt most acutely their insignificance in this world were helped to realise their whole worth as men. The first letter especially presents us with a wealth of ideas under this head. We have the thought that believers are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in them (iii. 16), that even the body has thus become the inalienable sanctuary of God (vi. 15, 19), that every individual is a member in the body of Christ, and may therefore not only recognise the worth of his individuality in general, but may put himself in this respect on an equality with all others (xii. 27). The motive, which here became so powerful, is represented in too limited a form when we content ourselves with finding it in the elevating and stirring thought of human equality. It went much deeper, being directed to make every man conscious of his own worth. It is true that we cannot refer all the ideas contained under this head in the letter with absolute certainty to the first preaching of the gospel. But our conclusion that they did belong to it is substantially confirmed by the evidence in the first letter of the actual results of the Apostle's first visit, resting as it does

on information supplied by the Church itself. For we are here brought into contact, not only with phenomena which show that heathen thought and feeling were not yet completely destroyed, but also with numerous instances of putting an extreme meaning on the Apostle's teaching. For example, while some were still influenced by heathen morality in their sexual relationships, there also existed a mistaken tendency to abolish marriage altogether. Some continued their intercourse with their neighbours amid the old heathen associations in a manner that was dangerous, and exposed them to temptation, but others, misunderstanding a warning of the Apostle, held that the Christian ought to avoid all intercourse with every one who, according to their new notions, was immoral (v. 10). Side by side with the vexation inflicted on the poor by the attitude of the rich at the common supper, we have the no less censurable conduct of the members of the Church at their meetings, their refusal to give place to one another in the exercise of their special spiritual accomplishments. From all this we obtain sufficient evidence of the prominence given in the Apostle's first sermons to the doctrine of the new life of the Spirit, which elevated the Christian above the world and ennobled the individual.

The Apostle's mission in Corinth was successful. In spite of all the troubles that occurred in the interval in individual cases he writes in the first letter with evident candour (i. 4 ff.), that the testimony of Christ was firmly established among them, that in utterance and knowledge of every sort they were enriched in Him; that they were behind-hand in no gift, and were waiting for the revelation of their Lord Jesus Christ. And again in the second letter, in a much more critical situation, and amid serious anxieties and heavy cares, he can still repeat (iii. 2), 'Ye yourselves are our (commendatory) letter, written in our hearts, known and read of all men.' His relation to them was unshaken; they were and remained his own Church.



§ 3. *Until the First Letter.*

The first letter to the Corinthians in our Canon, undoubtedly also the older of the two preserved to us, was written by Paul from Ephesus at a time when he was already occupied with the thought of visiting them once more (xvi. 1-8). He had not seen them in the interval, for all he knew of their life during that time had reached him in another way. There is not a solitary reference to any personal intercourse. Everything of the sort points clearly to his first visit, which up to the time of writing had been the only one. On the other hand, he frequently obtained information about them through third parties. He first mentions what he had been told by the people of a certain Chloe (i. 11). Then we learn that he had been visited (xvi. 17 f.) by Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus from Corinth. Finally (xvi. 12), Apollos is also with him in Ephesus, and he had been in Corinth after the Apostle (iii. 6). But a correspondence had passed between Paul and the Church, for he recalls a letter written by himself (v. 9), and replied to by them. He refers to one by them, probably this answer (vii. 1), which contained questions concerning matrimony, as well as, undoubtedly, several other subjects. These letters probably represent the whole of the correspondence that took place during this period. On the other hand, it is quite conceivable that Paul may have received other oral communications besides those named. The order of these communications, oral and written, can be easily determined with substantial accuracy. In the first place, Paul's letter was the earlier of those interchanged between himself and the Church. Further, the visits of the Corinthians occurred after this correspondence. From the way in which he refers to the people of Chloe we must conclude that their visit was comparatively recent, and that he had received their news after the Corinthian letter reached him. For there is nothing to suggest that the letter said anything about the parties of whose existence Chloe's people told him. But it is quite natural that in his present epistle (1 Cor.) he should have begun with this recent news, of

which his mind was full, and only then have gone on to reply to what the Church had written. We cannot directly determine the date of the visit paid by Stephanas and his companions. Paul does not refer to their communication, in connection with any of the affairs treated in his letters. And the omission is clearly intentional. The greater the importance attached by him to the maintenance of Stephanas' position, the more necessary was it for him to avoid everything that might be used to prejudice him with the members of the Church. Besides, there is no ground to suppose that Stephanas and his companions were the bearers of the Church's letter; on the contrary, this is improbable simply because the letter preceded, so far as we see, the painful news from Corinth. When Paul says (xvi. 17 f.) that these men had supplied the want caused by the conduct of the Corinthians, and indeed by a support which he himself was the first to feel, but which also held good for them, his words receive a satisfactory explanation if they arrived after Chloe's people. The consolation they brought him came to him also only after the despatch of Timothy (iv. 17, xvi. 10), the latter being sent off while the impression produced by the unfavourable news was still fresh. The probable sequence of all these events is accordingly as follows:—letter of Paul to Corinth; letter of the Corinthians to Paul; arrival of Chloe's people in Ephesus; despatch of Timothy; arrival of Stephanas and his companions; composition of our present letter. At the date of the latter Stephanas had already departed with his comrades, or greetings would have been sent from them.

We have not included in this summary the arrival and mission of Apollos in Corinth or his departure thence, because they are not directly discussed. We have only the two fixed points. From incidental details in Paul's letter he appeared in Corinth after the Apostle, and at the date of our 1st Cor. he was, like Paul himself, in Ephesus. We may suppose that his appearance in Corinth preceded all the events to which 1st Cor. directly relates. Apollos took no part in them, either by his actions or by bringing news to the Apostle. Paul speaks of his labours in Corinth, also,

as of a matter well known, but long past. In that case we must of course also assume that an Apollos party was only formed some time after his departure. And this supposition is in turn confirmed by the fact that no shadow of blame fell on Apollos for the creation of the party.

We know nothing about Apollos himself except what is to be inferred from Paul's statements; above all, that Paul looked upon his work in Corinth as simply a continuation of his own, and, in keeping with this, that the two were on good terms with each other in Ephesus. Our knowledge is extended somewhat by the Acts, which informs us that he was an Alexandrian, a scholar, and especially well versed in Scripture (xviii. 24). For the rest, the author has himself adjusted his relation to Paul and his individual position, somewhat clumsily it is true, by telling that he came to Ephesus, a preacher of Jesus, but only acquainted with the baptism of John, and that it was in Ephesus he first received better instruction from Aquilas and Priscilla, who, at his wish, recommended him to Achaia. When we take this story in connection with that of John's disciples which follows, it merely means that Apollos could only receive his knowledge of the baptism of the Spirit, directly or indirectly, from a genuine Apostle like Paul, and the author seeks thus at the same time to prove his peculiar and subordinate position. But the whole view thus given of his early Christianity is self-contradictory. On the other hand, the idea that Apollos was an Alexandrian scholar may also be inferred from Paul's statements.

In any case Apollos' whole attitude in Corinth was in complete agreement with Paul. Paul says, 'I planted, Apollos watered;' then, however, he places both under the one and same Divine blessing: 'God gave the increase.' Again: 'We are God's assistants; ye are God's field, God's building' (iii. 9). 'I laid the foundation, another builds thereon' (iii. 10). Nor have we any right to regard as a depreciatory allusion to Apollos the suggestion that straw may be laid on the foundation as well as silver and gold. For Paul was at the time considering everything that

had occurred in Corinth since the beginning. Nor has he reproached Apollos with seeking to overshadow him by his own mode and style. On the contrary, Apollos, as well as Paul, might teach them 'how no one should be puffed up against the other' (iv. 6). And when Paul goes on to describe the humble and insignificant position of the apostolic office in contrast with the conceit prevailing in Corinth, he is not speaking of himself alone, but he embraces Apollos also in the words, 'thus has God set us, the Apostles, forth' (iv. 9). For himself he claimed only the initial, the foundation work, the fatherhood proper in the Church. Still he was hurt when a party in Corinth now exalted Apollos and so cut itself adrift from him (i. 12). His sensitiveness on this point was directed not against Apollos but against the party. The clearest proof of this is that Apollos himself had no inclination to return to Corinth. Their personal understanding was therefore unclouded; but it does not follow that their methods of work were identical. Apollos was no disciple of Paul's; he was independent. His style of teaching was different, and we can form a general idea of it. The Apostle complains reproachfully that the one party holds by his name, the other by that of Apollos. He has introduced this censure, however, with an explanation of the reason why he himself could at first only give the Corinthians the simplest doctrine, the milk of the gospel (iii. 1 f.). Here we have the key to the explanation of the partisanship, and hence we are entitled to take into account also an earlier passage where the foolishness of preaching, the simple preaching of the cross, is said necessarily to come first, but without excluding the teaching of wisdom, *i.e.* the wisdom of God and His Spirit, when the Apostle had to deal with the mature, the initiated (ii. 6). We can therefore conclude, without any hesitation, that Apollos' style was more scholastic and philosophical, occupied doubtless with the higher—in other words, the allegorical—exposition of Holy Scriptures. We have nothing more definite. Nor is there anything at all to justify the opinion that the deviations which emerged in Corinth from the positive doctrine of Christ were due to Apollos. The only permissible conjecture

is that his general mode of teaching may have awakened a tendency to further free speculation. And it may again have fostered the temptation to criticise, and perhaps also to undervalue, the style of the Apostle himself. For the rest, we do not even know how Apollos became a Christian. In any case, he was thoroughly independent, and did not belong to the assistants of the Apostle.

The circumstances were of a wholly different nature that caused Paul to send the first letter of which we know, that which preceded our first epistle (v. 9). The power of heathenism was not yet destroyed in the sphere of morals. To this the only notice we have of the letter refers: 'I wrote you that you were to have no dealings with fornicators.' He did not intend this to apply to intercourse with the outside world. Such a prohibition, which must also have extended to all who were covetous, or extortionate, or idolatrous, would have been absurd. To obey it, it would have been necessary to go out of the world. He had been dealing with the Church itself: they were to tolerate among them no brethren to whom the reproach applied; these were to be expelled. How Paul got the news which caused him to interfere we do not know.

On the other hand, we know what the reply of the Church was. First it was objected that the demand was impracticable—a plea due to the misunderstanding that the exhortation applied to all intercourse with sinners, whether within or without the Church. It is manifest that they could not thus have misunderstood the Apostle, if the Corinthian Christians had learned like him to regard the Church as a society perfectly complete in itself. So nothing was done at the time in the direction he had indicated, and Paul was therefore compelled to return to the subject, all the more as the complaint had since grown, and become absolutely intolerable. The Church's letter, however, contained more than this ill-founded answer to his exhortation. It first proceeded to question him as to abstinence from sexual intercourse in general—an inquiry that arose very appropriately in connection with the subject just mentioned. In any case, it took the first place among those laid before Paul, and it gave him occasion to dilate to the



full upon the subject of marriage and the single state (vii. 1 ff.). The whole of his argument does not necessarily refer to actual incidents, but some of his instructions do, seeing that they quite clearly contest certain opinions actually entertained. Now, here we have something very different from the ancient heathen tendency to sexual licence. On the contrary, the question was raised as to the refusal of the conjugal duty in marriage, and a kind of union of men and women under an obligation to preserve their virginity. The right to marry a second time after the death of husband or wife was also debated. This all points to a fanatical denial of the sensuous nature—a denial that had manifestly not been encouraged by the Apostle. It was the natural product of the same soil on which it was so hard to extirpate the old customs of unchastity.

The second main subject on which the Apostle dilates, and also evidently because a question had been put to him, is that of sacrificial flesh (viii. 1 ff.). Here, of course, we again meet with the difficulty of giving up old associations and customs; but further, we have the false plea of justification on the ground of the liberty due to higher knowledge. It was this tendency chiefly which the Apostle had to oppose, and he confronts it with the thought of the considerate love which always seeks to avoid giving offence to a neighbour. If that was not the essential point, it would be impossible to account for the long digression in which Paul defends his apostolic dignity (ix. 1 ff.), which had been contested simply because he had sought on the same principle to avoid giving offence in matters of payment. But there is again evidence in this affair that exactly the opposite tendency was represented in the Church. There were also some who anxiously inquired where the meat came from, in order to protect themselves from any possible stain (x. 25).

From what follows in the Apostle's letter, we find that the document of the Church passed from the questions of marriage and the sacrificial flesh to the meetings of the congregation, and that under this head it first gave the assurance that they were mindful of and adhered to Paul's instructions (xi. 2). Paul gladly accepts these assurances, yet he is led, first, to discuss some pressing



matters in this connection and to give them a mixture of reproof and instruction; the points dealt with being the appearance of the women at their meetings with uncovered heads (xi. 3); and then certain abuses in connection with the common meals (xi. 17). These points, however, were not discussed in the Church's letter. The first is merely loosely attached to the assurance it had given; and Paul expressly says with regard to the second that he had heard of it. The case is different in regard to the following 'theme,' that is, the question about the spiritually gifted, the *πνευματικοί*; for he says that he will give a decision upon it to the Corinthians (xii. 1). Accordingly, information had been laid before him, and a question put, to which the assurance of their allegiance had probably formed the introduction. The point at issue was, in the first place, a general doubt whether the ecstatic utterances were not, as a whole, alien, and therefore to be looked on with suspicion, or to be rejected (xii. 2, 3). With this was further combined the offence given by the self-exaltation of these spiritual individuals. And, in fact, it was the so-called 'speakers with tongues,' who were here concerned, and whose pretensions threatened to disturb the peace of the Church, and to give the meetings a one-sided character. The point therefore was to arrive at the just appreciation of this utterance, as well as, on the other hand, of prophecy. This led further to the question of the uninitiated hearers (xiv. 23), and the regard due to them, to that of the general arrangement and delivery of addresses in their meetings (xiv. 26), and, finally, to that of the part to be taken by the women in the congregation (xiv. 34).

This is the last subject we are entitled to refer to the letter sent by the Church. It had therefore made a representation on three main topics: marriage, sacrificial flesh, and spiritual gifts. In all three two views or tendencies confronted each other. In the first, offence was given by a fanatical view that threatened to break through all existing bonds, in the second by a *Gnosis* which, with its liberty, considered itself superior to all scruples, and in the third by the passion for ecstasy and its obscurity. The inner connection is self-evident.

The Apostle must have obtained his knowledge of the other matters discussed by him, after he had received the letter, and from conversations with members of the Church. He tells us three times of the way he got his news. At the very beginning, in introducing the subject of the factions, he says 'that he has heard of them through Chloe's people' (i. 11). Again, in discussing the instances of unchastity, 'we hear thereof' (v. 1). And in the same way he declares that 'he has heard of' what he has to censure in their conduct at the common supper (xi. 18). But, further, it was not from the letter that he knew of the denial of the resurrection; in his epistle he is not giving a reply, but declaring the fact to the Corinthians on his own initiative, without saying where he got his news. The whole treatment, however, suggests that of this also he had received oral information (xv. 12, 33, 34, 35). It was the most important of all the questions raised. The denial threatened the dissolution of the new faith, by means of objections due to a Greek mode of thought. At first only one article of their creed was thus menaced, but the whole would, in consequence, be endangered, and therefore, at the close of the letter, at its climax, the Apostle discusses it with the greatest gravity. It was probably similar, as regards Paul's source of information, with both of the only remaining topics, the lawsuits brought by members of the Church against each other (vi. 1), and the custom of women coming into church with uncovered heads (xi. 3). Those then were the facts obtained by the Apostle from oral information: the rivalries, the case of incest, the lawsuits, the free customs of the women, the abuse connected with the supper and the denial of the resurrection.

#### § 4. *The Factions.*

The rivalries that had sprung up in the Church were certainly of quite recent origin. They had therefore not yet developed into actual schisms, the separation of the various parties into different congregations. We nowhere hear of such a thing. But opinions

were divided, and were labelled with the names of different authorities. How it happened that they could rank Paul or Apollos higher as a teacher is explained from the fact that the one succeeded the other in his labours. We are wholly ignorant of the course of events which led to the founding of a Cephas and a Christ faction. It can only be said with certainty that Peter had not himself come to Corinth, for Paul nowhere suggests that he had, but rather presupposes the opposite. And yet the whole partisanship was manifestly created by a following attaching itself to people who assumed, either the name of Peter, or that of Christ Himself, as their special property. What their purpose was in doing so Paul does not enter into here at all, nor does he ever discuss it directly. He desired, as he says in iv. 14, not to put them to shame at present, but merely to warn them. He therefore preferred first to send Timothy to them, and he could say all that was necessary as well as the Apostle himself (iv. 17). Besides, he should also come soon himself; and he would then test, not by their words, but by their power, those who had become arrogant, merely in reliance upon his absence. The only question was whether it would be necessary for him to come with the rod, or in love, and the spirit of gentleness (iv. 18-21).

We must therefore seek our knowledge of the meaning of these rivalries and the doctrine of the leaders indirectly, in the defence of the Apostle. Such a defence is indisputably contained in the first section of the letter. All that follows,—the whole discussion of moral evils, the reply to the questions arising from the life of the Church, and finally the instruction about the resurrection,—lies outside of this inquiry. Only incidentally, as especially ix. 1 ff., does the Apostle, while dealing with these matters, refer to his personal position; or as when the energy with which he gives his judgment, or vindicates his authority, *e.g.* vii. 25, 40, xi. 1, xiv. 37, makes us feel that he was afraid of his position being shaken. But the subjects there discussed have nothing directly to do with the rivalries. The headquarters of the treatment of this subject are to be looked for in the first part (i. 10–iv. 21), and here alone

can we obtain decisive enlightenment. Indeed, it is significant, that after this he is done with the business, and that then he is quite free, irrespective of this aspect of the situation, to turn to the discussion of the condition of the Church. The news has shocked and troubled him, he is anxious about the future, but he feels his influence still strong enough to be able to pass to the 'order of the day.' How entirely different in this respect is the whole impression of 2 Corinthians, or of the letter to the Galatians! We may therefore conclude confidently that, at the moment, the rivalry existed only in an elementary form. And this inference supports the opinion that Peter himself had not been in Corinth. We might conjecture rather from 1 Cor. ix. 6 that the Corinthians had become personally acquainted with Barnabas; but he did not stand on the side of Peter or the Cephas party.

The four names under which the parties ranged themselves (1 Cor. i. 12) are here adduced without further distinction in the order: Paulus, Apollos, Cephas, and Christus. One member said that he held by one, another by another. That Paul puts his own name first proves that the order which he observes is the historical one. He was the first teacher to appear in Corinth; Apollos followed him; and only then arose the parties of Cephas and Christus. The occurrence of Christ Himself in a line with the Apostles proves that we are here dealing, not with the assertion of a relation to the Redeemer that would exclude all human authority, but rather with another kind of authority; those who had adopted the name of Christ ranged themselves under a certain school quite as much as the rest. Finally, we may conjecture, from the combination of Paul and Apollos on the one hand, that, on the other, the two following names were more closely connected, and the whole four therefore fall into two contrasted groups. Now it is indisputable that Cephas was put forward to represent the authority of the primitive Apostles. But then, again, the party which assumed the name of Christ would also proceed from the primitive Church, and belong to Jewish Christianity.

It was not in the first place the doctrines of others which Paul

here opposed, but the idea of authority in general, which certainly did not emanate from himself, but was first introduced into the Church by these new elements. This introduction of human authorities led to a double perversion. The believer placed himself under men, whose only real office was to serve him; and at the same time he ceased to belong to Him to whom alone he ought, namely, Christ Himself. The combination of the Apostles with Christ in the party names has given Paul every opportunity to throw light on both these sides of the question. He twice completes his examination of the position, in i. 13 by asking: 'Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you, or were you baptized in his name?' and again, in iii. 21-23, with the words: 'Therefore let no one glory in man; all is yours. Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all is yours; but you are Christ's; and Christ is God's.' Against this reminder even the most zealous representative of Peter could urge nothing tenable, and the appeal to the name of Christ in support of a distinctive doctrine at once fell to the ground. For the rest, Paul never mentions Peter except with the greatest respect. He not only maintains (xv. 5), in keeping with history, Peter's absolute claim to have been the first to whom the risen Christ appeared; he also (ix. 5), in a passage of growing emphasis, mentions him at the head of those Apostles who are instanced as travelling with their wives. And on the other hand, when he is insisting that the preachers of the gospel are nothing but men, nothing but co-workers and servants of God (iii. 4 ff., iv. 1, 6), he intentionally speaks by name of himself and Apollos alone. Of course the truth is meant to be of universal application; but the name of Peter is avoided. On the other hand, it is undoubtedly quite as clear that the relation of the Apostle to Peter, or rather to the Petrine party, was quite different from, was much less intimate than, his relation to Apollos, or the Apollos-party. With Apollos he was more at home, and he could speak of him as he did of himself, in equally humble terms. With Peter it was different: Paul did not feel himself justified to the same



extent in speaking in his name without his sanction; he could only desire that the adherents of Peter should draw their own conclusions from his arguments, and apply them to their authority also. We can nowhere find anything except this boasting in their authority that is directly descriptive of the Petrine party. But if the question of the existence of authority in general was raised by it, the above would also apply to the fourth, the Christusparty.

Paul does not enter into particulars regarding this faction, but he charges its members with limiting Christ, and with making His name a badge for their party; they failed to understand that all believers, like all teachers, nay, all the world, belonged to Him. This does not indicate the assertion of an immediate intercourse, a spiritual possession of Christ. It is Paul himself who vindicates against them the possession of and communion with the Spirit. The name therefore points rather, like the other three, to the relation of those adopting it to an Authority, and their exclusive claim to its possession. They can only therefore have derived their claim to name themselves after Christ, from the historical connection with Jesus, and from the knowledge of his doctrine based thereon—in other words, from the advantages of the Apostolic Church. Now this party named after Christ is placed side by side with that of Peter; it would therefore appear, like the latter, to have originated in the Church of Jerusalem, but, at the same time, to have attached itself to another authority than that of the great primitive Apostle. The appeal to the name of Christ Himself can only mean that they aspired higher than to Peter, and that yet it was not possible to put any other disciple above the foremost of the Apostles; therefore this new authority was invested with the name of Christ. Now all this had certainly occurred before. The emissaries from Jerusalem had appeared in Antioch in order to decide finally in the great question of the admission of the Gentiles, and in doing so, not only to resist Paul, but to correct Peter. In the same way they had come to Corinth after Peter's followers to outbid his authority and doctrine. But in thus contrasting them-



selves with Peter, and maintaining that they were the first to proclaim the true Christ, their position can only be understood as identical with that of the intruders into the Galatian Churches when they professed to introduce the true gospel, *i.e.* the legal gospel which they contended had been taught by Jesus Himself. There is no ground for the opinion that in either instance these evangelists had been commissioned by James in the same way as the Antiochian emissaries. But after, as before, the attitude then assumed by James continued to be the mainstay of the party. And when it was a living authority that was wanted in opposition to Peter, the only one available was a brother of the Lord, who, in addition to his acquaintance with Him, possessed the prior title of kinship. For a gospel which traced the duty of observing the law to Jesus His brothers were the best witnesses. They had, as a matter of fact, known Him when for years he was obedient to the law, and on the other hand they had accepted His gospel of the kingdom only after His departure, still cherishing however their former recollections and transferring them to the new faith. Nor is our present letter entirely devoid of references to them. In 1 Cor. ix. 5 f. Paul indeed speaks only in the first place of certain definite practices which he claims the same right to observe as the other Apostles. Yet we cannot fail to see that these are merely applications of a general contention, and that in fact his interest centred in the question whether he was entitled to the full authority and respect due to an apostle. Now, in ranging on the other side, 'the rest of the Apostles, and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas,' the brothers of the Lord are not cited without reason, but simply because they had been appealed to in the Church in order to lower his own influence. And we may also well suppose that in the enumeration of the manifestations of the risen Christ, where Peter obtains his due position as the first witness, while James is only introduced much later (xv. 5, 7), Paul intended, by the way, to put the latter authority in his due place.

This also brings us to the question as to what movements had been introduced into the Church by the Judaistic party at the time

of the first letter. They had clearly not yet, at least, made the demand that the heathen should submit to circumcision. It is not discussed as a question of principles. In vii. 18 the Apostle says, 'Was any man called being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Hath any been called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.' Here, of course, circumcision is indeed rejected, but in a way which clearly shows that it was not the leading question of the day. This is proved by the comparison with the opposite practice of the Jews, who were ashamed of their custom; it is proved especially by the subordination of this subject to a general principle, deduced, however, from other matters. And we do not find elsewhere, either that the observance of the law was demanded, or that a preference had been claimed as belonging to Judaism. In the whole of the prolonged discussion about sacrificial flesh, Paul has said nothing that would indicate Jewish-Christian demands, nothing of deference being paid to their point of view. In saying of the Jews (ix. 20) that for them he became as a Jew, he only indicates an attitude which corresponded to the principles universally governing his conduct in this matter. And that the attitude to be maintained in regard to sacrifices was to give no offence to Jews, or Greeks, or the Church (x. 32) does not point to Jewish demands, but to Jews who watched the Church from without. When, further, Paul (xii. 13) illustrates the unity of the body of Christ by saying that Jews and Greeks, slaves and freemen, were united in it and were all on an equal footing, he is only stating an actual condition, from which he draws his conclusion for wholly different questions of a practical nature. Finally, it is to be seen from the discussion of the Lord's Supper, that the observance of the commands regarding food and cleansing was not on 'the order of the day.' The divisions which revealed themselves in a vexatious form at this supper rested rather on wholly different relationships and motives (xi. 18-21). And with the conclusion this also agrees, that partisanship indeed existed in the Church, but

that it had not gone the length of separation on grounds of principle. It is only possible to find one hint that the members were on the way to schism, namely, if we infer from i. 13-17 that in the case of new baptisms the parties appeared as rival competitors.

If the Judaists, however, had not here come forward as yet with their demands for circumcision and the observance of the law, yet they had all the more certainly sought to undermine the unrestricted gospel by an attack on Paul's own Apostolic position. In his defence of his labours the Apostle has conspicuously and intentionally avoided entering into these attacks directly; he evidently hoped to overcome them more readily by depicting their rivalries and this appeal to authority in general in their worthlessness, and by contrasting with the latter the right appreciation of services rendered to the gospel. For this reason he has expressed himself more explicitly as to his relation to Apollos, because, in spite of the fact that party spirit had appropriated his name, he could yet illustrate by the example of the latter the correct attitude of a Christian. But one point appears from this apology, which can be referred, not to the followers of Apollos, but only to the intrigues of the Judaists. Doubt had been cast upon Paul in the Church, and the proposal had been made to appoint a day for his appearance, a day of trial, when he should be heard in his own justification (iv. 3). In perfect consciousness of his Divine calling, he says, not merely that the proposal does not in the least trouble him, but that he does not even enter into judgment on himself; for the vocation he pursues is above him, and it is the Lord who has to judge him, and will judge him when He comes. The proposal, however, which he here indicates, and to which he cannot agree, can only have emanated from the factions, and the subject of the proposed conference could only be his right to the apostleship. But in another place he enters clearly enough into the objections raised against him (ix. 1 ff.), and at this point it becomes perfectly evident from what party they emanated. In one of the most important questions which agitated the Church,

that of the sacrificial flesh, the Apostle sets up one supreme principle, that of voluntary self-denial for the sake of the gospel, and he finds it impossible to illustrate this better than by showing how he had proved it in his own apostolic experience. The course of thought seems to lead him on inevitably; but it is only the breaking through of a deep and heartfelt solicitude; and therefore the apology once more bursts forth like a pent-up and now liberated stream. He is an Apostle, he has seen the Lord as well as the rest (ix. 1), and the proof of his calling is the Corinthian Church itself (ix. 2). That was his defence against those who would now put him upon his trial, because they had been told he had not seen Jesus. But the doubt had been fostered by reference to a matter now laid hold of by those who wished to prove to the Corinthians that, though he gave himself out to be an Apostle, he had not courage to behave like one, but sought rather to gain recognition by stealth. Paul had in Corinth, exactly as in Thessalonica, carefully avoided taking contributions for his own support. His deepest motive for doing so was the necessity of proving by self-denial his devotion to the gospel. Preaching was in itself his duty, an absolute imperative for him. But he could only prove his voluntary and whole-hearted absorption in his task by this renunciation, and all the hardships it entailed (ix. 15-27). And that he is here discussing a matter on which he was perfectly free to act as he chose and saw to be best, he vindicates by himself beginning with and zealously proving the universal right of the Apostles to accept support (ix. 7-14). His own abstinence and that of Barnabas, therefore, conveyed no reproach against others. On the contrary, their right to this support was certain, he claimed it for himself. It was indeed a miserable thing to try to attack and overthrow the Apostle with such a charge. We see from it how these Cephas and Christ people only ventured at first to promote their cause by intrigue and stratagem.

§ 5. *The First Letter.*

The other conditions, alluded to in the first letter, have little immediate connection with the factions, which were called into existence by the intrusion of foreign elements. They can only have been affected by them indirectly. The new parties were of Jewish origin. The state of matters which now called for the Apostle's censure points rather to Gentile modes of thought. And in this respect there was no essential difference between the news formerly retailed in the Church's letter, and that now brought to the Apostle by private individuals. The same nature shows itself, only in a coarser degeneracy, more undisguised, and less refined. The former presented us with an obscure fanaticism, dissoluteness, and self-sufficiency, the latter with gross moral deterioration, and the abandonment of essential parts of the Christian faith. Now it is certainly clear that the Judaism which had begun to assert itself could neither have been responsible for the immorality censured by Paul, nor have given any inducement to deny the resurrection. But the present ferment may well have received from it its dangerous character. In a Church of so brief a standing the fact that the character and position of its first Apostle had been called in question must have produced a disintegrating effect. The doubts raised against the authenticity and validity of his preaching could not fail to shake a faith recently planted and not yet secure. Freed from the restraints of the master by the criticisms levelled at Paul, they would learn to act in the main according to their own opinion. They were now invited to select those portions of his gospel which they were willing to adopt and observe. The new doctrine was resolved, as it were, into a number of schools. And he who on this ground got the length of making a selection might readily bethink himself more than once as to which of the obligations imposed upon him by the first declaration of the gospel he should recognise as applying to himself. It might now appear to him a matter of free choice how much of his life and thought he should submit to the



new doctrine, and how much to the old morality and custom. In this way the conditions brought before us in 1st Corinthians first became dangerous through the intrusion of the Judaists, the Peter- and Christ-people, with their attendant rivalries. Paul himself was looked upon not as a freeman, but as a slave (ix. 1, iv. 1-15). His immediate followers were to the same extent despised (xvi. 12). And yet these were Stephanas and his friends, the men who deserved the greatest gratitude for their services at the time when the Church was being founded, and on that account had become its leaders. But all that threatened now to be forgotten. Paul himself, however, was not on the ground, was hardly expected to return. All the more were those who had been till now his disciples thrown back upon themselves, their own authority and power of will (iv. 18).

The information given to the Apostle by the people of Chloe had already enlightened him sufficiently as to the state of affairs, and he was at the time most eager to go himself; he was anxious to intervene (iv. 18-21). But in the first place he could only send Timothy with the necessary instructions (iv. 17). Timothy was to act as his representative, and administer the principles and precepts that had been taught by the Apostle throughout all his Churches. He was not without anxiety as to the sort of reception his disciple would meet with (xvi. 10 f.). He therefore at the same time gave them to expect that he would come himself; his return was only deferred (iv. 19). But though it was his intention to follow Timothy soon, it was not in the meantime practicable. Affairs in Ephesus detained him, and made it just then impossible for him to leave. And therefore, on receiving the news of Stephanas and his companions, news that revealed still more urgent need for his intervention, he was compelled, instead of going in person, to act by means of a letter whose peculiar form is only to be explained by a conjunct view of all that had taken place.

The first letter is composed in a sense of two sections, which are widely distinct from each other in their main subjects, and



come in contact only at certain points. They are distinguished by their tone as well as by their contents. The letter begins with the Apostle's most recent anxiety—that excited by the last news. But Paul had further to reply to the Church's epistle, and to give his decision on a series of questions. He does not pass immediately to these from the factions. He has other matters at heart of which he has also been informed orally—the prevalence of unchastity in the Church, a special case of incest, and the disputes carried by members into the courts (ch. v. and vi.). Strongly contrasted with the spiritual tension of which Paul has already treated is the picture of licentiousness now given. And its discussion follows, like an echo, the question (iv. 21) whether when he comes he is to do so with the rod or with love. Cause enough he would find for the former; he need only raise the curtain and disclose the faults of their moral life. The one crying case of incest compels him now to begin by a judicial act. The offender must be expelled. Christians cannot suspend all intercourse with the immoral, for in that case they would have to leave the world: he thus corrects the misunderstanding that had arisen from the corresponding statement in his previous letter. But they must not permit such men to continue in their midst. From this stain the Christian is to remain free. The other theme, the lawsuits of Christians, is merely inserted, and almost as a *motif*, into this passage of exhortation and warning. It is not our part for the present to judge those who are without—therefore we may not, on the other hand, accept their jurisdiction; besides, if believers are destined to judge the world, the particular question is already settled. The Apostle breaks off (vi. 20) the warning against unchastity in a bold peroration, and only then sets himself to answer the Church's epistle.

And now (ch. vii.) begins a new letter, or at any rate a new section of the letter. What follows, therefore, bears a wholly different character: the language is now comparatively calm, official, instructive, and hortatory, and treats of a whole series of affairs belonging to the life of the Church. And as an answer

to the Church's inquiry, the discussion furnishes a subject new in form as well as in matter. The reference to the questions is repeated whenever a new point is taken up, as in dealing with virgins (vii. 25), sacrificial flesh (viii. 1), the spiritually gifted (xii. 1); under each heading a decision is given as had been desired, and therefore the matters are discussed one after the other, and each by itself. But however distinctly we must recognise this portion of the letter (vii.-xiv.) as an ecclesiastical decision on practical questions, Paul reverts, and not only in the section (ix. 1 f.), to his first concern, his apology; he always keeps his position in view, and therefore on occasion stakes (*e.g.* vii. 25, 40) his whole authority: even the great hymn to love (chap. xiii.) is inserted with an indubitable reference to his chief anxiety. This parenthesis is not, of course, personal in the same way as the apology (ix. 1 f.); but yet it is an outpouring of his feeling, which carries us back to the disorders in the Church and the attacks upon his position. It is this love which must expel rivalry from the congregational life of the Church; but it is also this love that must sustain him, and overcome the troubles that menace him. The doctrinal question as to the resurrection, finally, which follows those Church questions and allied subjects, has nothing to do with the factions. And yet Paul has also taken advantage of it to throw light on the authorities and their position (xv. 3-11).

With this matter the letter reaches its climax; here the Apostle brings to bear his whole authority, and the whole force of his own conviction. Here Gentile Christianity had to endure a more severe test than in its struggle to vanquish old customs, or its maintenance in all their purity of the new religious observances. It was not a single doctrine of the gospel which was now put upon its trial, not a hope subsidiary to the certainty of the faith. It was Christianity itself that was at stake. If the heathen who had been converted to Christianity relinquished this article of their belief, they relapsed into heathenism. With faith in our own resurrection stood or fell faith in the resurrection of Christ, and

therefore faith in Christ Himself and His redemption ; without it, the whole structure of the faith collapsed. Then the expectation of the Redeemer's victory in the great fight with the world would also disappear. This material world would gain its cause, and all had been in vain (xv. 12-34). No more eloquent representation could be given of the significance attached to the expectation of the future in the life and belief of the earliest Christian age. The strength and triumph of the gospel lay for it in the fact that its adherents believed in a new, and as yet invisible, world, in the shortly impending Kingdom of Christ. The Apostle's view was indisputably true to the actual facts ; the secret of his strength, in turn, is found in his perfect grasp of the situation. And his words therefore take the form of an appeal to the whole faith as it existed ; he insists with all his energy on the loss involved in discarding this article ; he shows how their whole creed was of a piece, and what therefore was the real issue. He first enters upon his proof further on (xv. 35 ff.), and even here it is no proof, strictly so called, but merely an exposition of the possibility of the resurrection. Looked at from another point of view, this passage shows us that he was dealing with Gentiles, to whom these later Jewish conceptions of the resurrection of the body were wholly foreign. He himself appeals to analogies from nature ; he illustrates the state of transition by the similitude of the seed and its fruit, and the conception of the heavenly body by the variety in the nature of sun, moon, and stars. But even this argument conducts him again to the simple declaration that it must be so, because, by the fundamental teaching of the gospel, flesh and blood can certainly not enter the kingdom of God (xv. 50). All this was exclusively written for Gentiles. It was also the resistance of a heathen mode of thought to these supernatural prospects which he had to overcome. And his opening, with its solemn enumeration of the proofs of Jesus' resurrection (xv. 1-11), is a unique and determinative foundation for all that follows, though even here the other reference is again revealed in what (8-11) he says of himself. He had been the last to

whom Christ appeared; in his case, the event was something extraordinary, almost unnatural, because he had been a persecutor. And yet it was a fact, a fact of grace, and had already proved itself more fruitful in him than in any of the others; but be that as it may, all who underwent the experience proclaimed the same truth, and the Church had also adopted it. Now, this was, indeed, not meant for the Gentile Christians in Corinth alone. Everything which Paul says here of himself and the other Apostles is a reply to those who had doubted his right. And not only so, but the emphasis with which he explains that in Corinth he declared in the very first place the death and resurrection of Christ according to the Scripture, and that his declaration was identical with that of the other Apostles, obviously tends in the same direction. The point was to prove that this Greek scepticism was by no means to be attributed to him or his gospel. We have quite as much reason for assuming a secondary apologetic reference to his accusers in this passage, as in those where he is zealously supporting a common Apostolic doctrine, *e.g.* the doctrine that the preachers of the gospel should live by it; or, again, as in those where he emphatically traces to the universal teaching of the Church his prohibition of certain customs, xi. 16, xiv. 33, in which women were concerned, which might be specially objectionable to the Jews. Broadly speaking, the whole of his teaching directed against heathen excrescences and errors necessarily assumed the form of a defence against all the charges which might be brought against him, on the ground of the repudiation of the law by Gentile Christianity.

As a matter of fact, however, the first letter to the Corinthians is, in its main portions, chiefly a history of the difficulties which the gospel had to contend with on heathen soil. However fruitful the work of the Apostle had been, it had by no means to deal here merely with receptive and plastic material. It came in contact with elements, rather, which neither forsook the old customs and conceptions so quickly, nor abandoned their facile sensibility and spiritual vivacity, but sought to adjust everything

in their own way. The spectacle presented by this Church is therefore essentially different from those of Galatia and Macedonia. Here it was not a question merely of self-preservation and the repelling of alien influences, but of defending the gospel, day by day, from a transformation that threatened to be consummated in the bosom of the Church. Hellenic thought and feeling accommodated themselves but slowly to the new religion. In every sphere, in sexual and social life, in the cultus, and finally in the creed itself, the Church, so recently founded, was threatened with destruction by the old dissolute morals, the attractive geniality of the pleasures associated with their ancient rites, the mode of thought rooted in a thoroughly sensuous life, and the overweening confidence of their dialectic. Those light-hearted Greeks saw no difficulty in combining unrestrained sexual intercourse, and participation in merry festivals, with the new faith; they deprived the faith itself of the manifest grounds on which it could be justified; and, pronouncing upon the doctrines contained in Paul's preaching, began to eliminate what seemed alien or incomprehensible to them. We see what they threatened to make of the sacred rite of the Lord's Supper, —an entertainment, a festal merry-making after the pattern of the feasts celebrated by the heathen temple guilds. And when the same men went one day to the Lord's Supper, and the next to a sacrificial feast with their former heathen associates, they only combined a new cultus with the old. And they sought to justify their conduct from the statement of the preacher that the gods were non-existent. In that case they pleaded that the sacrificial meal was simply an innocent enjoyment. But, on the other hand, the same spirit also gave an opposite interpretation to the ethical commands contained in the new doctrine, on the view that the practice of morality could only consist in a denial of the life of the body, in itself impure, and the right of marriage was at once threatened, and unnatural tests were applied to chastity. And so again the cultus was invaded by a frenzied ecstasy, fostered by the belief that man is nearest God when he is out of his senses. The Apostle's discussion of the condition of affairs in the Church

discloses therefore a motley scene, a ferment of conflicting forces, which were simply indications of the old heathen spirit not yet overcome. And still this host of contradictory phenomena was also a proof of the power exercised by the new faith, a power which shook everything, pure and impure, to its foundations.

Now, it was this that influenced the Apostle in his treatment of the Corinthian Church. And to his new task he was also equal. Impurity and evil he rebuked in stern and condemnatory language. Even these, however, he did not overcome by the law, but by the ideal. Unchastity he reproved by declaring that the life of man in the body was designed to be the temple of God, vanity and ambition by his still grander conception of membership in the body of Christ. He never contented himself with the mere prohibition, but everywhere exhibited the overmastering aim and object. To the specious knowledge interpreted to suit their own views by those who were half-heathens, he opposed the higher knowledge of the wisdom which is guided by love. To those fanatical aspirants to an unconscious spiritual luxuriousness he disclosed the presence of the Divine mind, thinking in the children of the Spirit with unclouded judgment, the spiritual greatness of the love that forsakes all self-interest, the prophecy that is really fruitful. He opposed to doubt in the world beyond the resurrection, the enchainning thought of a great universal history evolving itself in fixed laws. And all this was at a time when his very word, his whole position in the Church, was being menaced by the unwearied opponents of his work.

#### § 6. *The Second Visit.*

The Apostle speaks of a second intended visit to Corinth in several passages in our first letter (iv. 19-21, xi. 34, xvi. 3-9). For such a visit there was urgent need. The impressive warning wrung from him by the disruptive faction-spirit was but a weak substitute for his personal intervention. His absence was to be compensated for to some extent by the mission of Timothy



his representative, as he was perfectly familiar with Paul's principles; but the Apostle was not even quite certain that Timothy would obtain a good reception, that an attempt would not be made to intimidate or to slight him (xvi. 10, 11). Hence he spoke of his own impending visit in a threatening tone; he asked them if he was to come with the rod, instead of love and the spirit of gentleness (iv. 21). Those who were following divisive courses, and would fain have shaken off their connection with the Apostle, were already saying that he would not have the courage to return (iv. 18). But he himself firmly intended to do so soon. So he now gives in his letter the most necessary instructions as regards the Lord's Supper; all the rest he postpones and will settle when he comes (xi. 34). He expresses himself more fully at the close of the letter regarding his visit and the intentions implied in it. The letter was written from Ephesus before Pentecost (xvi. 8), probably before the end of winter. For he intended to remain till Pentecost, because a great door had opened for his labours (xvi. 8, 9); it is clear that he still proposed to dedicate a considerable period to this work. Then he would leave Ephesus, in order to return to Macedonia and Corinth (xvi. 5). But his plan was merely to travel through Macedonia, or make a short stay there; he meant to give the greater portion of his time to Corinth, so much so that he would perhaps spend the following winter with them. Even now he proposed to carry out the great collection, and, if circumstances permitted, to go for this purpose from Corinth to Jerusalem (xvi. 4). But this was not yet fixed; other intentions, possible journeys for missionary purposes, plainly haunted him; in any case Corinth would be his starting-point (xvi. 6). And once more his confidence asserted itself that he would continue to live with his Church on the old footing; the discordance had passed into the background. For the rest, the visit here intended by Paul was certainly his second, since everything relative to an earlier residence of the Apostle in Corinth refers to the first, that which began with the founding of the Church. Of any other subsequent to this there is no trace.

Paul undoubtedly carried out this second projected visit, and it took place before the composition of our second letter, but in another way than had been intended. To all appearance he formed a sudden resolve to go at once, on account of urgent reasons, to Corinth, but, not staying there for any length of time, he returned to Ephesus, where his work was not yet concluded. This journey therefore belongs to the period of his residence in Ephesus. But besides this, in the interval between our first and second letters he wrote another, now lost, to Corinth, and that after the journey he had taken. In addition to our two canonical letters, therefore, we know of other two, of which the one was dated before our first, the other before our second.

The Apostle states definitely that the second visit had been paid before our second letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. xiii. 1, 2). In speaking of his impending arrival among them he says: 'This is the third time I am coming to you.' He is here anxious to convince them that he will deal with them unsparingly, and that his threat, several times repeated, must be executed. For thus reckoning his threats as witnesses, he appeals to the principle laid down in Deut. xix. 15, that every word resting on the assertion of two or three witnesses is established. Now, he has threatened them twice (xiii. 2), once in the past, the second time in his present letter; the former threat was made on his second visit, the latter now, during his absence from them. When, therefore, he again visited them, he would have confronted them thrice, and then, by the analogy of the witnesses, his judgment became absolute; in other words, the threat would be executed, and indulgence be at an end. Any exegesis that would avoid the conclusion that Paul had already been twice at Corinth is capricious and artificial. But he has also stated in an earlier passage that his impending visit would be the third (xii. 14). There he speaks of his disinterestedness, of the fact that he had never added to their burdens. This was true of the past (xii. 11-13); and he now assures them that in his approaching visit he would still act as he had done (ver. 14): 'I will not be a burden to you.' But of this visit he

says, 'This is the third time I am ready to come unto you.' The number can only refer to the actual visits, not to the repeated intention. What would have been the sense of saying that he had, for the third time, formed the intention of not costing them anything? His words are only intelligible if we take him to have meant that twice already it had been so, and that the third time it would not be otherwise.

This enumeration of two visits already carried out is in itself perfectly satisfactory evidence of a visit between our first and second canonical letters. But we have an additional proof. The Apostle speaks in the second letter of having been in Corinth, and his accompanying description being absolutely inapplicable to his first long residence there, the assumption of a second visit is inevitable. In ii. 1 he says, 'I determined this for myself, that I would not come again to you with sorrow. For if I must grieve you, I myself can have no joy in you.' His deliberation and resolve refer to his latest and still unfulfilled intentions; the visit at present intended was to be of a different character from the former one; it was not to result, like it, in grief to them. Now it is absolutely certain that those words could not refer to his first residence. He reminds them, of course (1 Cor. ii. 3), how he had come to them in weakness, fear, and great trembling, destitute as he was of all oratorical arts; but this refers to the commencement, to his first appearance when preaching the gospel, and cannot be taken to characterise his whole residence. But besides, the words imply something wholly different from the 'presence in sadness,' as it is designated in 2 Cor. ii. 1, for by the latter phrase he means that he had caused them sorrow, had hurt them by his presence, by his words and actions. And this is something wholly different from his diffident first appearance, described in 1 Cor. ii. 2; it implies exactly the opposite. The distinctive character of the visit referred to in 2 Cor. ii. 1 compels us therefore to assume that in the period between our letters Paul was a second time in Corinth.

Now the letter, to which he also alludes in 2 Cor., was most

intimately connected with this visit. In the first place, we can have no difficulty in perceiving that the one was just as little our first canonical letter as the other was his first missionary visit. Immediately after saying that he would not come again to them in sorrow, he mentions (2 Cor. ii. 3 f.) that he had thus written to them 'in order to be able to come to them with joy.' He was anxious to get over the painful part of his duty in his letter, in order to clear the ground for his next visit. Therefore he had written out of much affliction and anguish of heart, amid many fears, not to grieve them, but to let them know the love that he felt so peculiarly for them. He refers again to the same letter (vii. 8 ff.), saying that though he had made them sorry, he no longer regretted it. The matter was at an end, and had resulted in good. He had grieved them, but grief had been followed by repentance, and all had been guided again into the right channel; now he could rejoice that he had taken the step he had. Now what is here said of this letter is wholly inapplicable to our first epistle to the Corinthians. No doubt the latter includes censure, but censure is not its predominant feature; it does not give the prevailing colour. Blame is throughout accompanied by praise and gratitude. But, above all, the opening and the close are noteworthy, the former so full of the renown due to Corinthian Christianity, the latter so expressive of a still undisturbed good relationship between Paul and the Church, of a deep desire to reach them soon, and to stay for a long time among them. This letter was not written 'with many tears;' it shows no trace of any strain, no reason to fear that the bond was in danger of snapping under the pressure of any misunderstanding between the two parties.

The close relations existing between the second visit and this lost letter are revealed by the fact that Paul speaks of both in the same language, as the means by which he had grieved the Corinthians. He refers to the visit in ii. 1 f., and to the letter in vii. 8, and in both cases he expresses himself in exactly the same way. And on each he makes the same comment, that the

ultimate purpose of his words was not to grieve them, that he had rather acted from love, and that his treatment of them was meant to result in their joy and their salvation (ii. 3 f., vii. 9 ff.). So close is the connection that we might be led to refer 'the coming in sorrow' (ii. 1) not to an actual visit, but merely to his intervention by means of the letter mentioned in vii. 8, had not the previous visit been proved elsewhere, and had not besides the context of i. 23 pointed unmistakably to his presence among them. The only inference to be drawn, therefore, from this relationship in their characteristics is that both visit and letter were due to the same circumstances, and belonged to the history of the same affair. With regard to their relative dates there can however be no doubt. The letter was subsequent to the visit; its effect, the answer to it brought by Titus, immediately preceded our present epistle, and, indeed, occasioned the Apostle to write it. The visit must therefore have taken place before the letter; and the Apostle's intention in writing was simply to continue the discussion begun during the visit. The matter had clearly not been brought to an end by his presence among the Corinthians, or it was then that the events occurred, which afterwards compelled the Apostle to write exactly as he did, when by the epistle he challenged a decision, at the same time hazarding everything on the result.

Now all this leads to the inference that events had occurred in the interval between our two canonical letters, which essentially altered the Apostle's whole position in reference to Corinth. Even external circumstances, besides, prove this. When Paul wrote our first letter he had already sent Timothy with an important mission to Corinth. Timothy was to take the place of the Apostle and clear up everything that had fallen into confusion; for this purpose he was intrusted with the most ample powers. This mission, with its history and its result, is no longer mentioned in our second letter. Timothy had evidently long ago resumed his place among Paul's companions. He was joint author of the letter, and there is not a hint of his having been involved in the affairs of the time. His earlier mission was a thing of the past; and in these later



affairs Paul made use of another representative, namely, Titus. But, besides, we no longer observe any reference to the various questions affecting the life of the community which occupied the bulk of the first letter. The situation had changed; and the alteration is perfectly evident in its effect on the plans formed by the Apostle for his travels. His first object in the second epistle was to explain, or, more precisely, to justify his change of plan. He had entertained and expressed a definite intention in reference to his impending journey, he had plainly announced it to the Corinthians. But he now gave it up; he still indeed intended to visit them, but not in the way which he had first proposed, and, in consequence, only at a later date. He was very anxious to explain how the change had come about. He did not wish his conduct to place him in a false light, to give any occasion for a charge of inconstancy and duplicity. Now the plan, here first discussed, and once more abandoned, is by no means the same as that announced at the close of the first letter. There he said he would leave Ephesus after Pentecost, and go by Macedonia to Corinth, in order to have longer time at the latter place. But the plan of 2 Cor., which he was again compelled to give up, while it indeed also projected a visit from Ephesus to Macedonia and Corinth, put Corinth first, then Macedonia, and lastly Corinth once more (2 Cor. i. 15 f.). In this case also the Corinthians received the preference: they were to be favoured not once, but twice. But, in addition, he was to go directly there from Ephesus, and this could only mean that he felt the urgent need of his visit. But even this intention was not carried out; he went from Ephesus to Troas, then to Macedonia, and from the latter point intended now to proceed to them. He thus actually carried out the plan intimated at the close of 1 Cor. But he does not make any reference to this fact; he simply speaks of having quite recently entertained another intention. His earlier announcement was already forgotten; too much had happened since, events with which his more recent plan and its alteration were connected, and by which the whole matter had obtained a deeper significance. Still this would not



satisfactorily account for the entire omission of the project contained in the first letter, and the only complete explanation of it is to be found in the fact that since writing 1 Cor. xvi. 5 f. he had actually been in Corinth. That event threw completely into the past every intimation made at the earlier date. How his journey to Corinth, when it did take place, presumably also formed a chapter in the Apostle's relations with Ephesus, can only appear from an examination of the latter.

We are now in a position to review, at least as regards their main points, the events which occurred in the interval between our two letters, and by which the situation had been so much altered. Of the issue of Timothy's mission we know nothing. It is possible that the subsequent history began with it; perhaps, however, it only commenced with the news that followed it. We are only certain that, before his work in Ephesus was completed, the Apostle unexpectedly found cause to go quickly to Corinth. The possibility stated, 1 Cor. iv. 21, that it might be necessary to come with the rod, had evidently come to pass. The visit was therefore by no means happy: it was spent in grief, and the worst was, that it had no satisfactory result. When he left them, the disturbance had not been overcome. Under these circumstances he returned to Ephesus, and attempted by letter what he had failed to do in person. The letter must therefore have had the same features as the visit; it was written under deep emotion, and was calculated, in the first place, to cause nothing but grief and pain to its recipients; it was by giving pain that it was to produce its effect. But the Apostle did not lose hope. So confident was he, that he looked forward to going at once to them, whenever he received satisfactory news. Only he would not then be able to stay for any considerable time. He would require to go from them to Macedonia, and only after that would he be able to return for a longer visit. At present his stay would be brief, merely long enough to confirm the reconciliation that had been effected.

But before he could get an answer from Corinth, Paul had been driven from Ephesus. He fled to Troas. There he could hope to

fall in with Titus, who had been intrusted with the mission to Corinth, and would be returning by this route. But he did not meet him, and he could not rest there. Driven by his own secret anxieties, he went on to Macedonia, and at last found Titus, who brought him the most favourable tidings from Corinth. Left to himself, Paul would certainly have gone to Corinth from Ephesus without halting, and thus he would have been able to fulfil his promise. But another consideration prevented him from taking this course. Had he gone before the quarrel then pending had been settled, he would have been exposed to the certainty of his visit assuming the same character as the earlier one; and he was anxious never again to meet them in a similar mood. Therefore he delayed until he was in possession of Titus's information.

### § 7. *The Dispute.*

It is evident, even from the external course of events, that the complication was very serious, which gave so gloomy an aspect to the Apostle's second visit to Corinth, and induced him to intervene in a corresponding spirit by the letter that followed. Its effects are still apparent in the composition of the second canonical letter. For while the crisis was temporary, and in the main surmounted, its causes still existed. And these give the letter quite a different colouring from 1 Cor. In spite of the tranquillity now begun, it was written throughout in great excitement. Anger and love, pain and joy, fear and confidence, alternately sway the Apostle's temper. We can everywhere perceive that his whole work had been threatened, and that his relations to the Church founded by him had been endangered.

We can gather what had occurred from the answer now sent by him to the news furnished by Titus. He speaks of it twice (ii. 5-11, vii. 7-15). In the former passage we learn, first, that it was a particular individual who was concerned. One man had injured him, yet not properly himself personally, but rather the Church; it at least was a fellow-sufferer. The majority of the

members had now awarded him the chastisement he deserved. With that the matter ought to rest. They had stood the test, and that was the chief thing. Forgiveness should follow punishment, love might now prevail, and preserve the guilty from despair. He was with them in pardoning the offender; nay, he had already forgiven him, and that for the sake of the Church, and in presence of Christ. Otherwise they might be outwitted by Satan, and greater evil, a deeper injury, ensue for the Church. It was therefore not merely forgiving love, but wise Church-leadership, that led him to give this advice. In returning to the subject in vii. 7-15, Paul refers specially to the letter which had called forth the Church's decision. He starts from the news obtained through Titus, and the mood which it had produced in him. He is uplifted by the action of the Church in his favour. The feeling is natural that now leads him to look back upon the stern language of his letter and to justify his words to himself. But he ought not really to regret his action. For it is to his having written exactly as he did that the result is due. The zeal now shown by the Church for what is right was wholly produced by his condemnatory letter. It is here unmistakable that the Church had formerly participated in the man's conduct by not opposing, by indeed sympathising with him. If they were now to understand Paul it was necessary for them to recognise that they themselves were concerned; it was necessary that their zeal for the Apostle should be reawakened; that was his object, the offence itself was not the question; he had not written as he did on account either of the wronger or the wronged. And this latter explanation is quite in harmony with his view that the matter should now be completely settled by forgiveness.

What had actually taken place, however, has not yet been clearly described, and we are therefore led to fall back upon the Apostle's statement as to the course of the affair, in order to discover its origin. Those who have held the view that our two canonical letters are closely connected, and have sought to find in the first the facts presupposed in the second, had first of all to ask where any one is spoken of in the former, capable of being

identified with the man mentioned in the latter. In this way the current conjecture was formed, that in the later passage we again meet with the incestuous person mentioned in 1 Cor. v. 1 ff. To this man 2 Cor. vii. 12 seems also to point, when it speaks of one wronging and one wronged; the latter would be the father of the guilty man, and the expressions—to injure, and to be injured—are consistent with an adulterous connection. Of course, the Apostle alludes to a crime on the part of the Church, and he speaks of having been personally aggrieved by their unfaithfulness. But this also might be explained by supposing that in this case the Church had not responded to the Apostle's urgent demand for the fitting chastisement of the offender. Thus he would not only have been personally insulted, but injured in his character as an Apostle; his interests and those of his cause were identical.

But, in spite of this, the interpretation is untenable, even apart from the fact that the interval between our letters is too great to make such a reference probable. In the first place, a comparison of the two statements about the man (ii. 5, vii. 12) is against it. The words—wronger and wronged—can only be applied to the case if they are taken by themselves. But it is clear that the misdemeanour (ii. 5) is designated as an injury directed against the Apostle, though he will not assert this to be its real character, and suggests, rather, that the Church itself was affected. But, in the second place, the Apostle could not possibly have dealt with the incestuous man in the way described in 2 Cor. In the first letter he demanded in the most solemn manner that the offender should be excommunicated; it is impossible that he can afterwards have belonged to the Church. He was to be banned, and given over to Satan; the curse would destroy him bodily, but was, at the same time, the only possible chance for the deliverance of his spirit. This makes impossible a simple pardon, of the nature granted, in the second letter, to the offender there discussed. The aim of that, according to 2 Cor. ii. 7, was that the man, already punished sufficiently by the proclamation against him and in favour of Paul, should not be chastised further and driven to

despair. This is wholly incompatible with the doom expressed by Paul in 1 Cor. v. 5, according to which the punishment had to be thoroughly carried out, in order that the spirit at least might have a chance of redemption. If, however, it be suggested that the judgment may have been recalled in consequence of the man's repentance, it is to be remembered that no mention is made of any repentance having taken place. Nor could Paul have said, as in 2 Cor. vii. 12, that in writing his letter it was not a question to him of wronger and wronged, but exclusively of whether the Church would take his, the Apostle's, part; on the contrary, if by the former the transgressor of 1 Cor. v. had been meant, then the whole discussion must have centred in him, and that too in all circumstances, no matter what might have happened since. His words show therefore that a wrong had indeed been committed, but of such a nature that it could be treated exclusively as a private matter, while its real importance merely depended on the attitude taken up by the Church in regard to it.

The last observation, however, leads us also to the conclusion that the misdeed affected the Apostle personally. He could only say that 'wronger and wronged' were of no account to him, if he were dealing with his own case, because, of course, he could overlook, if he pleased, an injury done to himself; and this view is alone consistent with the fact that in ii. 10 he makes the first advances towards pardoning the offender. This is confirmed by what he says of the procedure of the Church. The Church has atoned for its former conduct; in consequence of the Apostle's letter, the majority have resolved to reprove the offender for his wrongful action; he has been rebuked by the Church (ii. 6). But the reproof is not so much the punishment of misconduct as a satisfaction rendered to the Apostle. From the disposition now evinced, to the Apostle's joy, by the members of the Church, we can infer their earlier and opposite attitude. Their longing for him, their mourning over what had taken place, their zeal for him (vii. 7), suggest that they had been estranged from him; and in the same way his praise of their fresh-born eagerness, their

earnestness, self-defence, indignation, fear, longing, zeal, avenging (vii. 11), shows that they have now fully taken up the Apostle's cause against an opponent. The issue had not been that an offence should be punished—it would have been necessary to punish it in any case—but that they should take sides for the Apostle, and prove their zeal for him personally (vii. 12).

The outrage inflicted on the Apostle can only have been offered him during his presence among them; it undoubtedly occurred, therefore, during his second visit. He had been impelled to Corinth by grave news, indicating the growth of anarchy in the Church. When he arrived, his opponents seem to have carried out a project, the possibility of which he had anticipated (1 Cor. iv. 3). A sort of court sat upon him, *i.e.* upon his Apostolic claims, and during the process he was deeply insulted by the other side, and especially by one individual, without any effective protection being given him by the Church. He therefore left them in anger, without arriving at any result, and sent a letter by Titus calculated to provoke the final decision. The visit and letter gave his opponents a pretext for malicious remarks (x. 10, x. 1)—‘he is a hero in his letters merely, but weak when he appears in person.’ The importance of these events, their danger, and again the conciliatory attitude of Paul after the submission of the majority, are perfectly explicable if the whole thing resulted from party intrigues against the Apostle. The happy issue was (ii. 14 ff.) the triumph of his Apostolate, and that, not in opposition, forsooth, to moral indifference or heathen thought, but to the people who made a trade of the gospel (ii. 17); and therefore he passes at once to the examination of his gospel as contrasted with the doctrine of the law (iii. 1 ff.). But as yet it was only the majority of the Church who had stood up for him; the last step had not been taken. He himself therefore makes overtures towards reconciliation, but only in reference to the past. All the more determinedly he now penetrates in the present letter to the ultimate root of the case.



§ 8. *The Christus-Party.*

Just as the first part of 2 Cor. rests entirely upon an objective foundation, and after any digressions always returns to it (vii. 5 ff.), so also the second main division is wholly occasioned by and occupied with actual events. In the former, the Apostle discussed the episode of his visit and its results. In the latter he deals with his opponents, with their persistent instigations to revolt, and the attitude taken up by the Church. We are not perfectly clear as to the source from which the Apostle received his information. It may in part have been derived from his last visit. But the rest he has doubtless just obtained from Titus. For we see that the opposition sought to turn the latest events between Paul and the Church to their own advantage. Their allegations as to his weakness when he appeared in person, and the stringent tone of his letters, fit in perfectly with, and are undoubtedly based on, the course of events which included his visit and the following letter. Even in this respect we have an indication of the close relationship that existed between the earlier and the present crisis. And that they were connected can further be thoroughly proved, if we retrace our steps from the latter to the former, or from the second to the first part of the letter.

The Apostle tells us, at the very beginning of his controversy with them, who his opponents are; they are the Christus-people (x. 7); and we are entitled to assume without further details that we are once more face to face with the Christus-party of the first letter; for not only do they agree in their main feature, the having seen and heard Christ, but here, as there, this feature is combined with the attack on Paul's practice of declining any material support. Nothing is said of any other faction. Peter is nowhere again mentioned, and we may therefore conclude, either that his party had ceased to exist, or that it no longer shared in the dispute. Paul has only now to deal with this new class of opponents. When he names them lying Apostles (xi. 13), and, in ridicule, extra- or ultra-Apostles (xi. 5, xii. 11), we need no

elaborate proof to show that Peter, or the primitive Apostles as a whole, cannot have been meant. Apart from anything else, this is impossible because at this very moment he was endeavouring, by means of the great collection, to maintain the alliance formed (Gal. ii. 10) with them. Members or partisans of the primitive Church they may indeed have been. But Paul has not indicated this connection, and his reticence is clearly intentional; he is anxious as far as possible to avoid endangering the peace he had concluded with the Church.

From the first letter we could only make certain conjectural statements as to the Christus-party, but these are thoroughly confirmed in the second. Their action was precisely similar to that of the Judaistic opponents of Paul in Galatia. They had come forward with another gospel, they preached another Jesus and another Spirit (xi. 4). This other gospel was simply the legal gospel of the Galatian intruders, the other Jesus was the Jesus whom His erstwhile disciples had known, and who, according to them, had kept the law, and by precept and example bound His followers to do the same. It was on this feature in their preaching that they based their claim to possess, in contrast with Paul, their peculiar and only genuine apostleship. We also recognise the identity of these opponents by the fact that Paul rejects this gospel in the very same way as he had done in the Galatian letter. There he pronounced his anathema on any one who should preach the other gospel, even if he were an angel from heaven (Gal. i. 6-9). Here he calls them, not only false Apostles, deceitful workers, wearing the mask of Christ's Apostles, but absolutely servants of Satan, making use of their mask to introduce themselves as servants of righteousness, just as their master disguised himself as an angel of light (2 Cor. xi. 13-15). This is equivalent to the anathema. And, further, their legal standpoint is also indicated, when he says that they presented themselves as servants of righteousness. Apart from this, our letter does not enter any more than the first into the questions of the law, nor does it say anything to show whether these Apostles demanded

the circumcision of the heathens or the imposition of the law upon them. It would seem that they did not yet venture upon this step, and, so far, were content to invest themselves with the nimbus of this higher righteousness. The deceitful conduct with which Paul charged them consisted evidently, not only in posing as Apostles of the gospel, while at the same time falsifying it, but also in suppressing, or making a mystery of parts of their own doctrine (cf. iv. 2). And yet the substance of their teaching is perfectly evident from the grounds on which they advanced their claims. The qualities which they asserted that they personally possessed furnish us with a statement of their case. Paul says (xi. 22 f.): 'Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they servants of Christ? then I say, wandering in my wits, I am still more so.' Here we learn that the opposition introduced themselves as genuine Jews and sons of Abraham, and, at the same time, as the true ministers and servants of Christ. This however does not merely mean that an Apostle required to be a genuine Jew by birth, but that he should confess himself to be one; the prerogative of Judaism was thus set up, and that for all who proclaimed and accepted the gospel. The latter part of their claim implied that not every one who sought to proclaim the gospel could be a servant of Christ. This was rather a peculiar privilege, to which a special call alone entitled a man. These two main features are, however, also unmistakably indicated in the digressions in the first portion of the letter,—the programme of the law, in the Apostle's criticism of the ministry of the letter (iii. 6), and the claim to Christ, in his rejection of all knowledge of Him according to the flesh: in other words, the refusal of all value to the old historical relation (v. 16). Everything else that we know of the position of these opponents of Paul was consequent upon the above, and was especially meant to prove their Apostleship. According to them, there were certain marks by which a genuine Apostle was to be recognised (xii. 12),—'signs, wonders, and deeds of power.' But he would be also known by his certainty and

confidence; he would, in particular, assert without scruple his claim to the support due to him (xi. 7, xii. 13). Further, it was necessary that he should be introduced by a regular attestation, by letters of recommendation (iii. 2). The Judaists, therefore, came forward presenting such letters, and by them proved that they were the genuine servants of Christ.

But while the principles of Judaistic Christianity were involved in these introductions, and those who accepted them were thus to be imperceptibly ensnared, the immediate object of the party was to supplant the Apostle Paul, and they sought to secure this quite openly and ruthlessly. He was no genuine Israelite, or son of Abraham, as he ought to have been, and by his birth might have been; in fact, in Corinth he had denied his Judaism by failing to assert it. He did not possess the true gospel, he was no genuine servant of Christ, he could not show any proof of his office (iii. 1, iv. 2). When Paul charges his opponents with recommending themselves (x. 12, 18), he is plainly retorting upon them the accusation they had levelled at him. If he had really been an Apostle, it would not have been necessary for him to live by his trade (xi. 7) and to pursue his advantage by cunning (xii. 16-18). But his whole conduct was 'after the flesh,' was selfish and mean (x. 2). And now they followed everything he did with the closest attention; they misconstrued his whole conduct, and set it in a bad light. He found it necessary to sneak and flatter in order to make his way, and all the while behaved like a vain fool (xi. 16-21, xii. 6-11), pretending to things which were no business of his. He was only brave when at a distance; when on the spot, he was complacency itself (x. 1). In his letters he assumed authority, and even made threats; when he put in an appearance, his bodily presence was weak, and his speech ridiculous (x. 9-11, xi. 6, xiii. 10). They depreciated his successes; they disputed his possession of the marks of an Apostle, even visions and revelations were denied him. After all this, it is conceivable that they should finally have represented his demeanour in public as that of a fool, an epithet then adopted by Paul himself (xi. 1, 16).

The Apostle saw in the whole of this episode a temptation threatening the pure faith of Christ, as that of the serpent threatened the innocence of Eve (xi. 3). They sought a cheap reputation on another man's field of labour, taking possession of the harvest where he had sown (x. 12-18). And, strange to say, the very boldness and arrogance with which they entered on the scene secured their success. This Jewish importunity succeeded in overawing the people, and in securing a submission that was incredible. Paul endeavoured to make clear to them all that they had put up with. It was not merely that the party had, without further ceremony, laid their hands on these Corinthian Christians, and treated them as their own subjects (x. 12-18), but they had made the maddest use of their conquest in sheer self-interest and imperiousness: 'you put up with being oppressed, devoured, enslaved, domineered over, and struck in the face' (xi. 19, 20). The madder their conduct, the wiser the infatuated people imagined themselves in recognising them to be genuine. The picture we thus obtain by means of the Apostle's polemic is striking, but very far from unintelligible or surprising. Similar things have been repeated in all times, and that too in the history of the Church. And precisely in those days the phenomenon is by no means unprecedented. Men submitted to treatment from the representatives of Oriental religions in a way quite incredible anywhere else.

At any rate, we obtain from the record of those events a page from the history of this Christian Judaism. As regards their cause, those who appeared in Corinth were identical with the men whom we have already met with in Galatia. At the earlier period, they had begun to invade the territory of Gentile Christianity, and to depreciate Paul. But then they had also at once produced their case, circumcision and the law, though Paul could say that even in Galatia they were by no means so thorough and conscientious in their subsequent treatment of the law. In Corinth they were no longer so hasty in advancing the law. They were quite content with self-glorification. And what they had of their

own to impart was, in the meantime, the mystery with which they entrapped the credulous.

But, besides their arts and deceptions, another fact contributed to the ease with which the Judaists obtained a footing, not only here, but everywhere. It is impossible to over-estimate the advantage they possessed, even in heathen countries, from being the representatives of an ancient religion. This made it easy for them to describe a new man like Paul as a visionary (a fool).

### § 9. *The Second Letter.*

The position of matters in Corinth was now essentially simplified, in comparison with that which we found in the first letter. We are no longer concerned with a multiplicity of factions, or the tendency to a worship of authority. Only one party, the Christus-party, is now in question. This, and the Pauline Church, as it originally was, alone formed the opposing forces. And their antagonism had developed into an open conflict, through the events of the immediate past. Here, then, we find the aim of the whole letter, and when we see that even the first part leads up to the stormy effervescence of the second, we are in a position to understand the peculiar form of the epistle. The Apostle's practice, more or less observed by him in all his letters which have at once a polemic and an apologetic purpose, was to prepare his ground by a discursive introduction, even where the subject dealt with is stated at the outset as a theme for discussion. The most striking example of this is the letter to the Romans, where, after various passages of a wide scope, in which the ground is prepared on all sides for the decision of the main question, it is suddenly presented, at ix. 1, to the reader. The case is similar with the letter to the Galatians, which works round its subject, until we come to v. 1, 2. And the design of the first part of 1 Cor., which is complete in itself, is of the same character. Our second letter to the Corinthians is only apparently divided into two main sections independent of each other. However different the effect



produced upon us by its tone in different passages, the change is capable of being explained from the elements involved in the situation. The Apostle is so far from contradicting himself, that the various windings of his thought and expression shed light upon each other. The whole first section (ch. ii.-vii.) is in fact the preparatory introduction to the second, in which the Apostle wages open war with the Judaists (ch. x.-xii.). In the former, he is preparing for the controversy. And the more numerous the cross references in these sections, the more certain is the proof that the incidents which occurred at Paul's visit to Corinth, and afterwards until they occasioned his writing, must likewise have been most closely connected with the efforts of these Judaists in the Church.

If we consider the first part of the letter by itself, it is seen to contain a number of far-reaching reflections, which, imbedded in the course of a discussion, loosely knit, and often, it would seem, directed by mere accident, everywhere revert to the Apostle's personal relations to the Church, yet, starting with the thought of the Apostolate, also elucidate the nature of the gospel itself, the believer's hope, and his renewal and reconciliation through Christ. The whole is however bound together by a practical object; the Apostle is replying to the tidings brought by Titus. The Church has given him satisfaction, and he responds with his proposal that the disturber of its peace should be forgiven (ii. 6-8). Only this by itself does not end the matter; the favourable turn affairs have taken must be secured and perpetuated, all alien elements banished, every painful recollection blotted out; the Apostle seeks anew to root himself firmly in his Church. He never loses sight of this object for a moment; everything that intervenes is to serve, however generally it may be put, this final and enduring agreement, as is shown by the fact that (vii. 3 ff.) he reverts once more to the beginning of his letter, and repeats point by point what he had there said as to his position at the time—telling again of his imminent peril when he left Ephesus, of the journey to Macedonia and the arrival of Titus, and repeating his allusion to

his previous letter. Only then does he dismiss the affair ; but the reiterated statement of the facts and of his great anxiety forms the framework for all the passages that come between, and are designed in various ways to confirm and establish his Apostolic position in Corinth.

The whole letter is introduced (i. 3-14) according to the writer's usual practice, by the praise-giving, which here however could not simply refer, as is the rule elsewhere, to the life and faith of the Church, but is based on the consolation now afforded the Apostle by their present attitude to him in the midst of his great trouble (i. 4), an attitude from which he at once infers the prospect of unbroken fellowship between them and himself in comfort and sorrow (ver. 5-7). He repeats this (8-14), speaking more explicitly of his experiences in Asia, showing how these had vindicated the purity of his Apostolic ministry, and had tended to promote their union ; and here (ver. 13) he alludes to the charge brought against him of having written surreptitiously. He then (i. 12-ii. 17) enters into a discussion of his proposed journey, and of all the events which had occurred in their relations to each other, from the date of his last visit till the return of Titus, with his news of the fortunate issue of the whole case. This section also contains two allusions to difficulties which the agreement had failed to remove. The incidental apology at the beginning for the change in his plans shows that he had still to reckon with suspicions, and at the close he contrasts the purity of his own words and actions with the conduct of others who traded in the Divine Word. And this introduces us to three important passages containing the Apostle's apology, iii. 1-iv. 6 ; iv. 7-v. 10 ; v. 11-vi. 10. The first treats of the Apostolic service, as the ministry of the New Covenant, of the Spirit, and of liberty, a ministry in which the glory of Christ Himself and His gospel is reflected. Even this first passage is however not only personal, but has also an apologetic character. It begins (iii. 1) by rebutting the charge of self-commendation, and by retorting with a reference to his opponents' testimonial letters, and it closes with the practical

application, that the Apostle did his duty in this ministry without fear or reserve, because he preached Christ, not himself, and so needed not the secrecy indispensable to a bad cause (iv. 1 ff.). The second passage (iv. 7-v. 10) treats of the sufferings and anxieties of the Apostolic calling, and explains them, partly as the death-seal of Jesus from which life could alone result, partly by the certainty that they led directly to eternal glory. Nor is the reference to the actual situation wanting here. The confession (iv. 7), 'we have this treasure in earthen vessels,' is a voluntary admission of the charge of weakness, and the certain hope of the eternal homeland gives occasion to the assurance that his only aspiration was to please God (v. 9). In the third passage (v. 11-vi. 10) the subject is the aim of the Apostolic office: the task was to win men (v. 11), to plead on behalf of Christ for their reconciliation with God (v. 20), and the foundation of this work was the love of Christ, which rested on the certainty of His death, through which all things were become new. Even more than in the previous sections, the personal element and the actual circumstances here come into the foreground. He reminds them that they could not but know him in their conscience, he gave them an opportunity 'of glorying in his behalf;' they were to testify to his power in the face of those who boasted of his name, but really cared nothing for him (v. 11, 12). He refers to the reproach that he had been beside himself (v. 13): 'it was assuredly only in the service of God.' And as, lastly, he depicts all the sufferings under which this pleading of his for reconciliation was carried on, he passes once more (vi. 9 f.) expressly to their talk of him: 'how he is a man unknown, drawing near his end, crushed beyond hope of recovery.'

From all this we see how it is the apology that gives unity to the whole arguments of this first main section; not that Paul admits, indeed, that he was under the necessity of defending or recommending himself, but that he seeks to bring home to the Church's consciousness what sort of man they had found him in his Apostolic office. This attaches itself to the events in which both he and they have been concerned; but it is not to be

explained from them alone; it rather points to a situation still unsettled, and is only to be understood perfectly from the particulars given in the second main section regarding the Christusparty and their evil work in the Church. But we have the proof of this in the fact, that in our present passage are contained the important references to the boasted connection of the party with Moses and Jesus in the flesh (iii. 7, v. 16).

We next have, as the fourth section in the first main division, an exhortation (vi. 14–vii. 1) whose contents in their present place are apt to surprise us at a first glance. But if we keep in view the peculiar apologetic purpose of what has preceded, it does not appear to be at all out of place. An urgent warning against heathenism and immorality, it transports us vividly into the task contemplated in the first epistle. But here and now it serves still more to make the position of the Apostle clear. As Apostle to the heathens he is represented as invulnerable to all Judaistic attacks, because no one opposes heathenism more than he does. All charges from that point of view are rendered futile. But in reverting to the heavy task of his mission, he is not merely making a shrewd hit; his words spring from an inner necessity. ‘His mouth is open, his heart is enlarged’ (vi. 11); of itself there bursts forth the constant subject of his care, the first condition of their communion; ‘they must be cleansed of every defilement of flesh and spirit; perfecting holiness in the fear of God’ (vii. 1).

Between the two main portions of the letter the affair of the collection is inserted like an episode (ch. viii. ix.). Its present position may be directly due to the fact that Titus, after bringing the important news from Corinth (vii. 6), had already returned to that city (viii. 6), in order to promote the collection. But the episode is in its right place for another reason. It not only furnished a further proof of his claim upon the Corinthian Church; it showed also the nature of his relations with Jerusalem, and therefore refuted the charge that, as an Apostle, he was wholly isolated; his opponents had thus the ground cut away from under

their feet. And besides, by his mode of treating this matter, he meets the imputations that, though he made a pretence of refusing payment, he knew how to indemnify himself—secretly.

Paul had already introduced the collection (1 Cor. xvi. 1). As he had directed in the case of the Galatian Churches, so here, every one was to lay past something for it each first day of the week. Even now, in the midst of such great troubles, his chief concern was to carry out this constructive work. The attacks levelled at him by the Judaistic party were bound to lose their sting if he succeeded in implementing the agreement of Gal. ii. 9 on a grand scale, and in renewing his connection with the primitive Church. He had in the previous year already expressed a wish (1 Cor. xvi. 4; 2 Cor. ix. 2) that the collection should prove so liberal as to make it desirable for him to take it in person to Jerusalem. This challenge had proved so successful that he was now in a position to remind them of their responsiveness. He did not require to tell them their duty and to begin an exhortation. He had merely to use the recognition of what they had already achieved as a spur to fresh zeal, to a great effort, in keeping with the final aim of the whole movement (viii. 6, 10, ix. 1, 2). But he at once passes to the brilliant success of his pleading in the same cause among the Macedonian Churches, a success which could not fail to rouse emulation on the part of the Corinthians (viii. 1 ff.). Not that he desired thus to compel them; they would only give proof of the genuineness of their love as imitators of Christ Himself; nor was it a question of enduring hardships, they were only making an exchange: what was given to the poor in temporal was to be received from them in spiritual blessings (viii. 8-15). Then he enters more immediately into the present mission of Titus and his companions (viii. 16-ix. 5). Titus had already at his last visit begun to promote the collection (viii. 6), and had now volunteered to conduct it further (viii. 16 f.). In the present instance, however, two brethren were associated with him to represent the Macedonian Churches (viii. 23). They were appointed, not to influence the Corinthians, but to act as



witnesses who would ensure Paul against injurious reports, and, at the same time, inform the Macedonians of what was passing in Corinth (viii. 20, ix. 3). In a third passage (ix. 6-15) the Apostle again discusses the collection, and exhorts his readers to a liberality which would certainly be blessed and rewarded by God, in order to sum up the ultimate design of the whole movement, which was meant, not merely to supply the wants of the saints (ix. 12), but to lead the recipients to recognise the genuineness of Gentile Christianity, and thus to knit more closely the bond of faith between the two sections of the Church (ver. 13, 14). Looked at in this way, the collection was not merely adapted as an Apostolic work to bind the Church anew more firmly to Paul, it was directly involved in the circumstances which form the main subject of the letter. Paul took up the right ground on which to checkmate the Judaistic opposition when he brought the Gentile Christians into fraternal union with the primitive Church. On the other hand, it became absolutely impossible to dispute the fact that the Christus-party, however they might come from Jerusalem, or appeal to their connections there, were neither representative of that Church nor emissaries of the primitive Apostles. Paul wholly separated his relations with Jerusalem from the matter in which he and his opponents were involved.

The discussion of the collection at this point in the middle of the letter is therefore only apparently episodic. It serves to prepare the way for the Apostle's dealing with the Christus-people, quite as well as the whole apology which, in the first part, he has appended to the latest incidents. Only in the present case the matter is approached from the opposite point of view. There everything recalled the bond which existed from past times between the Apostle and his Church. Here he explains also the bond which united both with the primitive Church. Thus the Judaistic intruders were deprived of their leverage on both sides, and their defences were utterly broken down (x. 4).

The second main section of the letter, from x. 1 and onwards,



contains the attack upon and condemnation of the enemy. The action of the opposition itself led the Apostle constantly to combine his own apology with his judgment upon his enemies. This section is therefore, in its own way, quite as really apologetic as the other. The only difference lies in the point of view. In the first part the Apostle had to deal with the Church itself, which, at least to some extent, had allowed itself to be misled. He had to remind the members what kind of man they had known him to be. The references to the perversions and calumnies of his opponents, meanwhile, though they pervade the whole of his discussion, are only subordinate. In the second section he seeks to annihilate his opponents themselves. His own defence is included in this, because their whole efforts were designed to undermine his authority and his rights; the defence, therefore, turns entirely on their allegations against him. And, consequently, the references to the Church, and to the disposition and views of its members, are here, in their turn, secondary. The whole, however, takes the form of an urgent exhortation to the Church itself. He does not directly address his enemies; he has nothing to do with them, and invariably speaks of them in the third person. We may conclude from this that they did not belong to the Church; they were outsiders, and sought to destroy it. But the exhortation to the Church was necessary, because its members had yielded, to some extent, to their seductions, and still wavered. The Apostle intended to punish all disobedience; but he could only do so if he was perfectly sure of the obedience of the Church itself (x. 6). Here we have, at the same time, the practical reference of this section. All he says was meant to prepare them for the visit, which he intended soon to make from Macedonia, and during which he would bring the whole matter to an end (x. 11, xii. 20, xiii. 2, 10).

At the moment the Apostle knew that his enemies were busy insinuating that no one should be dismayed by his threatening letters; it had already been seen how weak he was when he appeared in person; the same thing would again be evident. He

knew that they were more than ever engaged in mysterious boasts of the other gospel, the other Jesus, the other Spirit, and were raising expectations of the arrival of one who would rightly show for the first time what an Apostle really was, who would be able in very different fashion to estimate the real worth of these Greeks. He knew that they were once more trying to depreciate him by alleging that he was compelled to earn his bread by his work, because he dared not claim the rights of an Apostle; that they disputed his possession of any of the marks of an Apostle: 'he is no genuine Jew, no warranted servant of Christ; he can point to no great revelations, no signs and deeds of power.' In his arrogance and his fantastic assertions he was only to be looked on as a fool. All this the Apostle has woven into his writing, quoting, refuting, satirising, and censuring their speech. His whole discussion moves on the line of the information he had received. Obscure phrases become transparent as soon as we attend to the references, and they are, in part, perfectly explained by indications already given in the first section.

He begins (x. 7) with his opponents' contention that they alone possessed Christ, in order to dispose of the pretensions on which they founded their claim to appropriate the mission sphere of another. Then he passes on to his so-called folly (xi. 1). He does not deny the zeal thus interpreted, but it is zeal for Christ, and for the purity of the Church. The power of the word he has indeed satisfactorily established, and he has proved the sincerity of his intentions by his unselfishness. The latter none but deceivers could pervert. Once more he reverts to the charge of folly (xi. 16); he adopts it, though in another sense. They force him now to boast: he is a Jew as well as they, he has been attested a servant of Christ more than any other by a ministry replete with sacrifices and sufferings; nor has any one ever surpassed him in revelations; yet, after all, his real boast must rest in his weakness. And then, summing up, he turns once more (xii. 11) to the Church, appealing to the Apostolic traits which they had witnessed, and the unselfishness which they had experienced.

And all his defence of his authority has, as its sole object, the edification of the Church (xii. 19). This dispute, unchaining as it does all their passions, threatens, in the general confusion of their ideas, to open the door anew to moral licence (xii. 20 f.). Here is the last and greatest danger. Thus he returns, exactly as at the close of the first section (vi. 14 ff.), to the immoralities of the heathen community, and asserts once more in the closing passage (xiii. 5-9) that the whole discussion is designed with no other object than to ensure their Christian life.

### § 10. *Results.*

The Apostle repeats, finally, his definite assurance that he will return to Corinth immediately, this being his third visit. It will also be decisive. He tells them plainly that the question is whether the Church can continue to exist in its present form, or whether there must be a forced secession on a large scale, which, by the removal of unreliable elements, will reconstruct it (xiii. 2, 10). From this thought he does not shrink. How things turned out we have no means of knowing. The Acts tells us nothing, except of a residence for three months in Greece (xx. 3), while it designates the journey thence to Macedonia as a flight from a Jewish plot, which hindered him from going directly to Syria. We have probably here a confused statement of the change discussed in 2 Cor. i. 16, in Paul's first proposed route. No Corinthian representative is mentioned among the companions for his journey to Jerusalem (Acts xx. 4). Yet we cannot infer anything from this omission, if we suppose that some of them are included in the 'we' of xx. 5. We have no information from any other quarter. But it is significant, at all events, that, according to Clement's first letter, there existed in Corinth at the close of the century a considerable Church with a stirring inner life, that Paul was highly esteemed there, that his first letter was in use, and that veterans were at the head of affairs. All this supports the view that this Church had continued to exist with a

settled tradition, and as a Pauline institution. We may therefore assume that Paul came out of the conflict victorious.

The fight was severe. The opponents of Paul had assailed him with an animosity whose bitterness is to be explained, in part, precisely from the fact that they did not venture to state their real demand, but limited themselves wholly to the personal attack. And yet this makes it all the more conceivable that the cloud should have quickly passed away. When we examine what Paul's polemic has to say concerning the Church and the Church's attitude, then it is impossible to avoid the impression that we are dealing, not so much with a change of faith as with the transient excitement of a facile disposition. Paul had been insulted, and a time had to elapse before the insult was retracted. But what is then his case against the members of the Church? Nothing much more serious than that they had lent an ear to delusive statements, and had submitted for the moment to the tyranny of arrogant pretenders. Nothing is said of their having been moved to enthusiasm for the religion of the law, or of their being prepared to take great obligations on their shoulders. Nor was it the attractive splendour of festivals and ritual which had dazzled them. They had listened to suggestions that this Paul, who had seemed so wonderful and become so dear, was not at all the right man, that there were others who had really known Jesus and been accepted by Himself as His servants, and who were therefore alone acquainted with His gospel. In comparison with them Paul was only a bungler, who could not even speak. They were the men to tell of heavenly things, for they alone had received the most marvellous revelations. And the achievements by which they indicated and proved their apostolic vocation were quite different from his. Such were the representations that awakened their curiosity and excited their expectancy, while, on the other hand, they instilled doubt into their minds in regard to what had previously been provided for them. It was therefore essentially the seductions of the novel, the strange, and the mysterious, the hope that they would see and hear things yet more wonderful,

which had been at work, and this assumption is supported by the influence exerted by the venerable religion which those men claimed on their side in opposition to Paul. And the description of Paul as a fool, by whom they had let themselves be infatuated, might at once meet with assent on the part of all those whose spiritual grasp was far from strong, and who now, at a glance, saw their own experience and conduct presented, in its external aspect, as in a mirror. Nor is there any contradiction implied in the fact that the men who adopted this criticism were, at the same time, greedily desirous of a more sensational form of their previous experience, and for that reason became the prey of swindlers. For it is as swindlers that Paul at least has here characterised the Judaists. In view of all this, the danger that threatened the Apostle's institution was indeed great enough. It was not so much that there was reason to fear a seriously considered transition to Judaism, as that the work which had been founded should come to naught in sheer caprice, that neither the old nor the new should endure, that the whole thing should end in deception and disappointment. Perhaps the test went no further, and the tempters withdrew with their promises unfulfilled. In any case, Paul must have held the field. His task was accomplished when he succeeded in restoring the waverers, in founding his structure deeply and firmly.

The literary procedure of the Apostle corresponded with his task, and is unique. Nothing like it is contained in any of the writings we have from his hand. In the first place, Paul has nowhere else gone so much into matters of detail in defending himself. This letter is therefore distinguished from all the rest by the singularly vivid picture it gives of his sufferings and his burdens, of all the toils of the Apostolic calling and the difficulties in his way. A fragment of this is contained in the first letter (iv. 9-13). More pointed and thorough is the sketch in the second letter (vi. 4-10)—a sketch that is developed into a finished picture with definite statements in xi. 23-33. Unfortunately another chapter in his history is not discussed with the same detail. To



the marks of an Apostle he reckons, apart from the sufferings, something further in xii. 12: 'signs, wonders, and deeds of power.' But he has not specified what he includes under this head. On the other hand, he has given us a brief but yet noteworthy glimpse into another sphere, that of the visions and revelations of the Lord (xii. 1-7). It is evident from other passages that Paul's action was determined at important points in his life and calling by revelations. He not only felt the irresistible impulse of resolve as such, as a power that took possession of him, but it shaped itself in visions and voices. But in our present passage we learn of something else. What he tells us of a flight to the third heaven (according to the Jewish view), and again into Paradise, where he heard words no man might utter, is not related like his other visions to his practical life; it stands alone, a form of the pure inner life of contemplation. Here we have the states and experiences from which he drew his strength, not for separate resolves, but for the certainty with which he proclaimed the higher heavenly world, and demanded devotion to it, that is to say, for the proclamation of the Kingdom of God itself. Further, the conditions were ecstatic,—not that they suspended his consciousness, for he retained his recollection of them, but they disconnected this consciousness from its foundation in natural sense-perception, as is expressed in the words (xii. 3): 'he knew not whether when his flight took place he was in or out of the body.' Moreover, we know from 1 Cor. xiv. 18, 19, that he was also at times in a state in which his intelligence ceased to act; for there he thus describes the 'speaking with tongues,' in which he excelled all who were in Corinth. But the notable feature in the communication of his special revelations is further that he imparted it wholly against his will (2 Cor. xii. 1). Only reluctantly does he speak at all of things which necessarily proved his Apostleship, because a certain amount of self-glorification was in that case inevitable. But in xii. 1-7 there is still a difference; of this experience it was not right to speak: he could not repeat the words heard in Paradise. The danger was especially imminent here that the glory



of this wonderful experience should end in self-praise, and that those who heard of it should not merely exalt the vision, the revelation, but should admire the man to whom it had been granted beyond what was fitting (xii. 5, 6). He himself was indeed guarded against this error. A bodily infirmity humbled him salutarily (xii. 7); an infirmity which must have been related to these ecstatic states. The power which resided in the revelation was to work itself out precisely in this weakness, to his salvation, and the good of the cause (xii. 9). It is perfectly plain, indeed, that the Apostle was thoroughly aware of the double aspect of this side of life. As he opposed the encroachments of ecstatic practices in the speech with tongues, so here he has not overlooked the danger of fanaticism. He believed absolutely in the reality of the visions, and derived from them necessary spiritual support. But they were for the recipient alone; they were to be preserved as a sort of sanctuary; and for himself it was his duty to see that they did not turn him from the right path. All this shows how Paul drew strength from an inner life of feeling and of fancy, steeling himself for action by these spiritual resources, yet how the while he recognised that conscious thought must remain master.

Paul has shown himself in this letter, as elsewhere, an unsparing controversialist, for he kept the cause alone in view. The energy with which he fought reminds us vividly of the Galatian letter, where we first saw him repelling these preachers of another Jesus and another gospel. This gospel itself, the legal gospel, they gave him no occasion as yet for refuting; they had not yet unveiled it, but merely excited some expectation of it (xi. 4). It could be no concern of his to speak of it first. But he unsparingly unmasked all their efforts and allegations, their pretensions and stratagems, their treacherous misrepresentations, and their selfish intentions. They had calumniated him and depreciated him as a fool; he, in turn, treated this extra-apostleship with the bitterest sarcasm; he uncloaked the impudence and insincerity that sought to reap on another man's field; but the whole severity of his

critique centred in his description of their work as the work of Satan, of themselves as his servants, and seducers from Christ. Nor has Paul in this letter wholly avoided the doctrinal background of this Judaistic agitation. He has, to begin with, illustrated two of their positions, in a passage that occurs before he has yet spoken explicitly of their conduct. He has estimated (iii. 3-18) the importance to be attached to the law and to the authority of Moses. There the glory of service under the new covenant is alone described, the old covenant being antithetically presented as its foil; but thereby is taught by implication the result of persistence in the former. The other article of Judaism, the genuine knowledge of Jesus, is treated quite similarly; it is disposed of in connection with the Apostle's vindication of his masterful though apparently senseless entrance on his work, his argument being that after the redeeming death of the Christ every claim based on human tradition was got rid of, that He Himself had carried them to higher ground (v. 15 ff.).

That the Apostle had to do with Gentile Christians is in this letter, as in the first, implied throughout. His descent differed from that of his readers; thus he speaks of the Jews as his own people (xi. 26, cf. v. 24); as regards his nationality, his origin was the same as that of his opponents: they were all Hebrews, Abraham's seed (xi. 22). As long as he could avoid it, therefore, he did not speak of the law to these Corinthian Gentiles. He was indeed, in this respect, two men, as it were, in one. As he says (1 Cor. ix. 20 f.), 'to the Jews he became a Jew, to those without the law he was as without law.' Certainly the first clause does not mean that when he was with Jews he still recognised the law as authoritative, just as little as the second declares that when among Gentiles he imitated their mode of life. But his words do mean that he won the Jews along the line indicated by the law, by showing them how through the law they must die to the law, in order to live to God (Gal. ii. 19), just as he converted the Gentiles to the higher life without making them follow this path. Yet that Christian theology conditioned by the law, which we

know as Pauline doctrine, is not the whole Paul; he imparted it when confronted by Jews and Judaists. Where he did not need it, that is, when he was dealing with Gentiles, he took the other line, so plainly indicated in the review given in the first letter of his mission in Corinth.

The second letter is not only distinguished by its peculiar plan—a plan conditioned by its occasion and object; it also gives a wholly unique picture of the Apostle's activity in two directions. In the first place, it shows pre-eminently how completely the Apostle was master of his mood. The letter is from beginning to end one of mood; but the mood, far from being identical, varies constantly. Joy and sorrow, anxiety and hope, trust and a sense of injury, anger and love, succeed each other; the one being ever as complete and powerful as the other. And yet there is neither vacillation nor contradiction. As each is roused and warranted by circumstances, so he remains master of all. He throws his whole being into every emotion, and he is always the same. His was an extraordinary mobility of feeling and conception, only to be controlled by an extraordinary force of character.

The second feature disclosed pre-eminently by this letter is also a constant interchange, but of a different sort. It is the interchange of the particular and the universal, the mingling of the discussion of the subject in hand with instruction in the highest matters. This letter, which at a first glance is entirely concerned with the questions and interests of the day, yet contains, in the midst of these, passages which belong to the most important sources for the doctrine of the Apostle as a whole. Thus we have the statements about the Old and New Covenants and the being of Christ (ch. iii.), the relation of the present to the future state (ch. iv.), redemption and reconciliation (ch. v.), and the incarnation of Christ (ch. viii.). And not only do these outstanding sections and propositions find their place in our letter, but it may be said that not even the slightest point is discussed without a universal application, without a reference to that which is ultimate and supreme. The look that has just been fixed upon

the near-lying scene passes immediately to the distant prospect; from the surface it everywhere penetrates into the depths. Nor is it only so where the subject itself, as it were, demands it. The difference with his Church and the contest with his enemies led almost necessarily to such a treatment, for here at every point it was a question of being and not-being, of the faith, of Christianity itself. But in other matters, and especially in the discussion of the great collection, how consistently he follows the same course everywhere! There he does not rest content with the duty, with what is praiseworthy and well-pleasing; he points to imitation of the Redeemer Himself, to the sowing for eternity. He was not only at every moment himself, but at every moment he was wholly absorbed in the gospel. And that was the true source of his power over the minds of men, the source of his victory.

## CHAPTER V

### ASIA

#### § 1. *Paul in Ephesus.*

THERE can be no doubt that, when Paul mentions Asia as in the sphere of his mission (Rom. xvi. 5, 1 Cor. xvi. 19, 2 Cor. i. 8), we must understand by the name the Roman province which embraced the whole of the western division of Asia Minor, *i.e.* the territories of Mysia, Lydia, Caria, and the western portion of Phrygia. This is supported by the idiom of the whole of the New Testament writings, and especially of the Apocalypse. For the Churches of Asia named in that book (i. 4-11) are specified by the epistles to the seven cities, and these belong to Lydia and western Phrygia. In the same way the Acts (xvi. 6-8) is capable of no other interpretation; Asia is here contrasted, on the one hand, with Phrygia and Galatia, and, on the other, with the province of Bithynia. The distinction of Phrygia from Asia and its combination with Galatia are due to special causes (cf. xviii. 23). Mysia also is particularly named, yet it is plainly comprehended again in Asia; for, from the fact that the Apostles do not preach in Asia, it follows also that they omit Mysia. Ephesus appears (xix. 10, 22, 26, 27) as the capital of Asia. So also xx. 16-18. Asia and Ephesus occur again in the same relation in xxi. 27 (xxiv. 28); cf. xxi. 29. And it is specially significant that the eye-witness designates (xxvii. 2) the coasting-places of the province as *τοὺς κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν τόπους*. Further, while Tychicus and Trophimus are (xx. 4) cited as belonging to Asia, Trophimus is described

(xxi. 29) as an Ephesian, and we see from other passages that Tychicus also was referred to that city. As to Paul, in 1 Cor., written from Ephesus, he sends the greetings of the Churches of Asia to Corinth (xvi. 19). And in 2 Cor. i. 8 he speaks of the persecution which had driven him from Ephesus as having befallen him in Asia. Capital and province imply each other here also, and the same thing is repeated, on a true conception of Rom. xvi., in Rom. xvi. 5.

Paul wrote 1 Cor. from Ephesus (xvi. 8): 'I will remain at Ephesus until Pentecost,' and 2 Cor. soon after he had left Asia (2 Cor. i. 8, ii. 12, 13). Now we know from the latter that he was in Corinth between the dates of composing the two letters. He had gone there from Ephesus, where he afterwards returned. From this we infer not merely a prolonged stay in Ephesus, but that it had become his domicile. But his residence is seen to extend further back, because at the time when the first letter was composed he had already passed through experiences which could only have resulted from his labours having attracted attention (xv. 32), because his activity had then entered its second stage (xvi. 19), and, still further, because a number of Churches had come into existence in Asia,—*πᾶσαι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῆς Ἀσίας* (xvi. 9)—*πάντες οἱ ἀδελφοὶ* (20). For from Rom. xvi. 5 it follows that no other than Paul himself had begun in that province the work of conversion to the gospel. From all this, the long residence, the persistence with which he resumed it—and that in spite of a great and even then lasting resistance—whenever favourable prospects once more showed themselves (xvi. 9), we also see clearly the significance he attached to his task, and to the securing of a foothold in this region. We are therefore perfectly justified in considering Asia as being, along with Galatia, Macedonia, and Achaia, one of the great provinces, and Ephesus as one of the chief centres, of the Pauline mission.

We find ourselves here in a peculiar position, however, in comparison with those other provinces, in the first place, as regards Pauline sources of information. In the other instances we have



everywhere a more or less intimate acquaintance with the conditions and history of the Churches by means of the Apostle's letters,—that to Galatia, those to Thessalonica and Philippi for Macedonia, those to Corinth for Achaia. This source fails us for Asia. For the letter to the Ephesians, as it is now headed in the canon, either did not originally contain the name of this city in its introduction, or it was struck out at a very early date, from which it would follow that the letter itself was adopted, but was not held to have been sent to Ephesus. Although, therefore, the announced arrival of Tychicus at the close (vi. 21) tends still to point to Ephesus, this is of little consequence, and is rather a suspicious sign. The letter itself is absolutely destitute of statements which would point to any degree of relationship between the author and the recipients. And, finally, and above all, it differs so completely, both in style and in language, from everything known to us as Pauline, that it is impossible to ascribe it to the Apostle. Now this want of an epistle similar to the others that have been preserved causes a serious gap. Meanwhile one important observation suggests itself as a likely inference. The want is explained if, first, the one long residence of the Apostle of which we are certain was also the first, and if, secondly, it came to an end in such a way that the connection was essentially disturbed, and his relations with the Church in consequence took a more perplexed, a darker form. These clews are confirmed by further observations.

Another peculiar circumstance in the history of this Asiatic mission of Paul consists in the later destiny of his work in Ephesus. It is true that elsewhere also we can follow the further course of his institutions only imperfectly, or not at all. The Church of Corinth is only traceable as Pauline to the end of the century. Our knowledge ceases for Macedonia with the letter to the Philippians. Of the Galatian Churches we hear nothing after the mention of their participation in the great collection. But with Ephesus and Asia the case is still different. The information we receive from Paul closes here somewhat later, namely with the

above-mentioned flight. But this cessation is not all. Various indications emerge to show that this Pauline institution soon yielded to other influences. Above all, within the New Testament the Apocalypse claims its sphere for John, without any certain trace of a reference to the past under Paul. On the other hand, a series of writings which do refer to Paul confirm more or less the fact that the connection with him had passed away. The Acts (xx. 16) makes him avoid Ephesus so early as on his last journey to Jerusalem; it ascribes this to haste; but in the address which it represents him as giving at Miletus to the representatives of the Ephesian Church (xx. 18), he is made explicitly to foretell (xx. 30) a great revolt in that city. This the pastoral letters to Timothy conceal, but in a way so vacillating and uncertain that their testimony is rather for than against it. According to the first letter Paul left Timothy behind in Ephesus under conditions historically inconceivable (i. 3); but there is an absolute want of any personal relations on the part of the Apostle with the Church. The second letter does not presuppose the presence of Timothy in Ephesus. It speaks of a universal renunciation of Paul in Asia (i. 15) and then mentions only a mission of Tychicus to Ephesus (iv. 12). All this is simply adapted to indicate the condition of matters in this region as wholly dark.

We accordingly come to the conclusion that Paul had lavished a great part of his time and strength on Ephesus; but he had begun this work only after he had obtained great results elsewhere. His activity was conspicuous and fruitful, yet only amid repeated and very hard conflicts. It broke off suddenly, and his work soon fell into ruins, till it was reconstituted by another party and by other forces after his death.

For our knowledge of the Pauline mission we are however not limited merely to the scanty and, in part, obscure information contained in the two Corinthian letters. This is supplemented by a small but comprehensive writing from his pen, which proves that the Apostle's institution still existed, at least into the period of his latest missionary labours. The letter to the Romans closes with

the benediction (xv. 33), at the end of chap. xv. But this is followed immediately by a passage which is unique in its style among the letters of Paul that have come down to us. It begins by recommending Phoebe, a woman of Corinth, or rather of its port, Cenchrea (xvi. 1), and goes on (xvi. 3 ff.) with a long list of greetings, in which no fewer than twenty-six individuals are named, who must have dwelt in the place to which the letter was directed. The closing formula (xv. 33) by which this piece is preceded would not of itself preclude the possibility of a post-script containing personal details having followed the letter in chief. But we are struck by a fact which makes it impossible that this passage can have formed part of the epistle to Rome. The greetings cannot have been addressed to that city. Paul had never been in the Roman Church. The letter itself shows incontestably that he is seeking to come into touch with it for the first time, because personal relations had hitherto been wanting. Under these circumstances it is, generally speaking, inconceivable that Paul could have known so great a number of supporters there, known them personally, and therefore been in a position to send them greetings. But if we run through the whole list, then we see further, that not only are the names of those greeted known to him, but their circumstances, domestic, social, and ecclesiastical, and their earlier history as well. The Apostle is able to form a complete picture of the Church, and is perfectly familiar with all its sections. Finally, in the case of a number of these names, he recalls the past in which he and they played a joint part; he remembers their common experiences in labour and suffering, and further mentions services received from them, which presuppose a prolonged connection in the same place. From all this it is impossible that these greetings can have been directed to Rome. Nor is it difficult to answer the question as to the place. That it must have been a mission station at which Paul's stay had been prolonged and his sufferings especially great, leaves doubtless large room for choice; yet this applies pre-eminently to the city of Ephesus. But, further, one of the first men to be greeted, Epænetus (xvi. 5),

is described as a brother especially dear to the Apostle, because he was the first-fruits of Asia for Christ. Here the name of the place is given. And the list contains no single name that would contradict this view, or point to another locality. The name of Narcissus (xvi. 11) is not conclusive for Rome. Most of the others are, however, found here alone. Prisca and Aquilas, and, later on, Rufus, are exceptions. The two former are from 1 Cor. to be sought for in Ephesus. A Rufus is mentioned along with Alexander in Mark's Gospel as son of Simon of Cyrene. Here we have the name given to the son of a woman dwelling at the place under discussion. There is nothing to prove that the same individual is meant. But even if he were, our hypothesis would not be affected.

Now it is absolutely unnecessary to suppose that we are dealing with a mere fragment from a letter. The whole style of this list of greetings rather suggests a special class of writings. Its object is sufficiently evident from the introductory recommendation of Phoebe. To this is appended, in the form of greetings, the list of those persons to whom she was to be introduced, and the note is thus of the nature of an attestation, which she could lay before the individuals, because it was expressly addressed to them. The greetings were necessary to make it a commendatory letter, an *ἐπιστολὴ συστατικὴ*. There was no necessity for such a note containing anything further, and even if it had been wholly confined to the greetings, we would have had no reason for supposing that we merely possessed a fragment. For the rest, a short exhortation is added (xvi. 17-20), which was probably appended to the letter. It contains, indeed, several features, both in thought and language, that are unusual with Paul. Yet this is hardly more marked here than in the short additions that elsewhere close the Pauline letters, written in the Apostle's own hand, and all distinguished by concise thoughts and figures, abrupt sentences, and peculiar words. Finally, to the commendatory letter, probably, also belongs the following short section (xvi. 21-23), which adds additional greetings from other individuals who were with the Apostle, among these, from Tertius, the writer of the letter. On

the other hand, the last portion (xvi. 25-27), the doxology, was hardly written by the Apostle, and therefore forms part neither of the epistle to Rome nor of the commendatory letter written for Phoebe to Ephesus.

The combination of this note with the epistle to the Romans may be easily explained if both were composed at one and the same place, and were perhaps also transcribed by the same writer. In this way they could both be first copied in Corinth; the commendatory letter had probably no further address. Thus, then, they were circulated together, and soon came to be looked upon as forming a single document. But because the last postscript of the writer to the commendatory letter did not furnish a formal conclusion to the whole, it became all the more easy to supplement it at an early date by appending the doxology.

If the commendatory letter was composed at Corinth, it may have been during either the second or third stay which we know the Apostle to have made there. Not during the first, for that occurred before the Church in Ephesus was founded. It is to be noticed that at the time Timothy was with the Apostle. This may have coincided with the second visit, for at the date when 1 Cor. was written, Paul had sent Timothy to Corinth, and no good ground exists for supposing that he was not still there, when Paul undertook the journey to the city made in the interval between the composition of the two epistles. It is most probable that it coincided with the third residence in Corinth, for Timothy is joint-author of the second letter. This however was written in Macedonia, whence Paul meant to return to Corinth, as he no doubt did. It is therefore natural to suppose that Timothy accompanied him. But there is yet another consideration that speaks for the composition of Phoebe's letter during the third residence. The combination of the latter with the epistle to Rome suggests that they were probably written at the same time. The composition of Romans can however only be assigned to the third stay of the Apostle. For in it he expresses his intention of going to Jerusalem on the business of the collection (xv. 25). Accord-



ingly, this is also the date of Phoebe's letter. At that time therefore the Ephesian Church was still firmly attached to the Apostle.

This letter, written by Paul as an introduction for Phoebe, is not to be compared of course with the great epistles to the Galatian and Corinthian Churches. It gives neither instructions nor exhortations, as they do. Nor does it to the same extent, therefore, reveal conditions and events in the inner life of the Church; even the short address appended to it does not supply us with any information in this direction. But in the very names, and in their grouping, as well as in the short notes of a personal and historical nature, it still furnishes us with very valuable knowledge. On the other hand, the narratives contained in the Acts of Paul's labours in Ephesus can be employed only to a very limited extent for his history.

When we collate all that is to be obtained from Paul's letters concerning the Church in Ephesus, it is so far from being adequate, that we must give up any idea of recovering from it a continuous narrative, or even a comparatively precise sketch of some definite period. But we possess important statements as to his fortunes in Ephesus, and besides we have a picture of the composition of the Church after his separation from it, which, at the same time, reflects light upon its earlier history.

In considering Paul's fortunes in Ephesus we must keep in mind the fact that we are dealing with a prolonged residence, but, further, that his stay was interrupted and divided into two parts by his second visit to Corinth. These facts we know from the Corinthian letters. But we can also recognise them in the Acts. It reckons, first, an active period of two years and three months (xix. 8, 10), to which is afterwards added, however, a further residence for an indefinite time (xix. 22). Nor is the division of the whole mission into two sections omitted. Only it is not due to a journey on the part of Paul to Corinth, but is connected with the mere proposal of such an undertaking, a proposal which, at first, is only followed by the sending of Timothy and Erastus (xix. 21 f.). The division is here also hinted at.



Paul himself, at the period to which 1 Cor. introduces us, was already occupied with thoughts of departing from Ephesus. He intended to reach Corinth by Macedonia, in order there to spend a considerable time, perhaps the whole winter, but then to continue his mission in another quarter, where, he did not yet know (xvi. 5, 6). At present he was still in Ephesus, where he intended to remain until Pentecost, so that it is to be supposed he was writing in winter or in spring (ver. 8). Of Ephesus, he says 'a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries' (ver. 9). In spite of the last qualification, the situation was mainly favourable; he was in full march to success; only we may conclude from his words that this favourable situation was of recent origin. For this very reason he was still bound to the place; he could not get away at present, and his other plans therefore were still indefinite. On the other hand, his view was plainly that he would soon be able to leave without anxiety regarding the future, and in that case would not be forced to return so quickly. Among his companions at the time were Apollos, then also Aquilas and Prisca (xvi. 12, 19). Of all three he speaks by name to the Corinthians, because they were known to and held relations with them, Apollos' connection being of such a nature, as the letter indeed shows us more fully above, as to have led the Corinthians to expect his return to them. Paul excuses himself for this not having taken place on a recent opportunity, that is, for the failure of Apollos to accompany Timothy; it was not his fault: Apollos himself was unwilling to go at present, but intended to do so afterwards. The only possible reason why, in what follows, Aquilas and Prisca are alone named among the brethren who send greetings, is that personal relations existed between them and the Corinthian Church.

In this passage, the concluding words of the letter, the only suggestion that matters were not so prosperous at an earlier date is contained in the statement that the door had now for the first time been opened to the Apostle in Ephesus. And the admission

that there were still many opponents somewhat qualifies indeed the favourable report of the present, but yet only so as to involve a challenge to further activity. On the other hand, a single verse at a previous place in the same letter informs us of earlier experiences of the darkest kind. Paul argues (xv. 29-34) that the Christian who had no hope in the resurrection would have a cheerless and meaningless battle to fight. And he says (ver. 30 f.) 'Why do we also live in danger from hour to hour? I protest by my boasting, brethren, in Christ Jesus our Lord, death is daily before me.' Even these words are uttered from an overflowing sense of personal and severe experiences. But he continues (ver. 32), 'If merely as man I fought in Ephesus with wild beasts, what does it profit me?' This is no figure of speech; it is fact. What would be the meaning of comparing his enemies with wild beasts, unless we understand that he had at least contended with physical force, with an attack aimed at his life? For only then would the event support and emphasise the preceding clause, that death was constantly before him. But no violence offered him by men can be so represented as to give a sense in any degree tolerable to his words, that he fought when with them with wild beasts. Just as little, however, can we entertain the thought of jeopardy, and a lucky escape from animals encountered accidentally by him while wandering through the desert (cf. 2 Cor. xi. 26) in pursuit of his calling. The definite word, the expression universally current for a judicial penalty, can only be understood in this, its unequivocal sense. Paul therefore had been accused in Ephesus, and then been condemned to fight with wild beasts; the sentence had also been carried out, but he had escaped death, and been pardoned. We have only reason to raise one question with regard to this statement. It is surprising that in 2 Cor. xi. 23 ff., where he enumerates all the sufferings inflicted upon him by nature and by man, Paul cites the corporal punishment he had endured, mentioning also an instance of stoning, but does not adduce this, the strongest example of his afflictions, *i.e.* does not adduce it expressly, for it may certainly be comprehended in the

many death-crises of which he there speaks. We may seek to explain this omission. Perhaps he intended only to bring forward, preferentially, details of his sufferings at the hands of the Jews, because it was with his Judaistic opponents he was comparing himself. Perhaps he was recalling only the more remote events, those less known to his readers: with this matter they must certainly have been acquainted. Perhaps also, for some reason or other, the narrative of extraordinary events was accidentally broken off after the mention of the flight from Damascus. All these are conjectures; a genuine explanation we do not possess. The objection, however, loses its point, simply from the fact that the instance which is wanting in the one letter is given in the other, addressed to the same Church. Nothing justifies us, therefore, in departing, or detracting from his definite statement. Again, we do not know how his life was preserved, whether by an extraordinary pardon in the arena, or by an act of grace which might lawfully be interposed if the beasts refused to fight. The fact remains. And one thing is certain, the punishment would be imposed by the heathen judge; and it would only be imposed after Paul had been put on his trial for an offence against religion, or for inciting to disorder. The whole event is thus an evidence that his apostolic activity, his evangelic mission, his denial of the gods, and his persuasions of others to revolt from them, were condemned as capital offences. And what does this extreme consequence mean? It at once discloses labours on a grand scale, a work that had become conspicuous, a bold warfare with the heathen cultus which flourished in Ephesus.

This fight was followed by most serious results. It put the Apostle in a position from which nothing but a miracle could have delivered him. But he was delivered. And it became possible for him to begin afresh. Now, for the first time, was the great door opened before him. It is easy to conceive that the wonderful occurrence should have doubly drawn attention to him and his cause, that the very martyrdom he had suffered should have exercised an attractive force. His opponents, indeed, were not

thus overcome; they continued to oppose and threaten him. This fact hangs like a dark cloud side by side with all the cheering prospects connected with his efforts. And his fear was fulfilled. The evidence of this is contained in the account we possess, in the opening of the second letter, of his departure from Asia. It would be a mistake to make any difficulty of the fact that he tells us here a second time of the public and imminent danger to his life, which he had escaped only as by a miracle. There is nothing to rouse our suspicions in Paul's being twice placed in a similar position. On the contrary, it would have been almost incomprehensible if the resumption of his work, with evidently enhanced success, had continued unnoticed and unassailed. Persecution could not but be renewed; and so it happened. At the moment of writing 2 Cor. nothing, or at least nothing definite, was known of it in Corinth. Not long before, Paul had sent Titus on urgent business to that city. At that time he must himself have been enjoying a temporary peace in Ephesus; still Titus was in a position to tell them of threatened danger, for it is not without reason that Paul says, 'their intercession had helped him' (2 Cor. i. 11). But it was only after Titus's departure that the storm burst. He first felt the desire to describe it to them (2 Cor. i. 8) while writing in Macedonia, where Titus had met him on his return. So full was he, weeks after, of the impressions left by his experience, that the very first greeting of the letter takes its tone from the mood caused by his severe sufferings. Simply because he could no longer share and exchange what he had so deeply felt with those who had been most immediately involved with him in the persecution, he was all the more constrained to confide this participation in his affliction and comfort to another Church. But he did not then get the length of telling his story; perhaps because he was looking forward to meeting his readers soon; also, in any case, because he was anxious to discuss the Corinthian crisis itself. The communication is thus not one of facts, but rather merely of reflections. A calamity had befallen him in Asia, one so heavy, far beyond his strength, that he had been driven to despair of his

life (i. 8). For his own part, he had been compelled, humanly speaking, to pass sentence of death upon himself (ver. 9). He afterwards felt that he had been delivered from death (ver. 10). That is all we learn,—less of fact therefore than we gather from the single phrase, in which he tells us of his earlier experience, the fight with the wild beasts. Perhaps the general form of the words of itself suffices to give a hint as to the nature of the danger. Possibly it implies that on this occasion it did not reach the length of complaint, process, and judgment,—that it was rather the hatred of the populace which menaced and persecuted him. He dared not a second time wait for extreme measures; he had to give way and leave the place. Yet, even so, it was a deliverance from death.

The letter sent to Ephesus on behalf of Phoebe contains a few statements which confirm and further illustrate these fortunes of Paul. Four persons directly took part in them. Of Prisca and Aquilas, whom he calls his fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, he boasts that they staked their own heads for his life (Rom. xvi. 4). Among those greeted are, further, two men, Andronicus and Junias; they were Jews, and had been Christians before himself; they had earned a good name as Apostles of the gospel; in Ephesus they had not merely united with him in its service, but had accompanied him into prison. We cannot say to which of the two periods of his residence this or that incident belongs. But the fortunes of these men, as well as their fidelity and self-sacrificing spirit, testify also to what Paul had himself endured.

Although we are led, in the first place, to think of attacks instigated by heathens, and although this may have rather restrained the Jews, yet the conjecture is of itself warranted, that the latter, a numerous body in Ephesus, cannot have looked with indifference on the Apostle's work. According to Acts xx. 19, it was Jewish plots which caused his troubles, and it was afterwards by Jews from Asia (xxi. 27) that the storm was roused against him in Jerusalem.

§ 2. *Ephesus in the Acts.*

The representation given by the Acts of events in Ephesus is however far from reliable. It is precisely the crucial points in the Apostle's statements, as given through the Corinthian letters, that are wanting. Of course we have events narrated that disclose a certain relation to those of which Paul tells us, but only the more striking is the discrepancy when we come to the critical point. The similar foundation only leads us to conclude that we have here a remodelling of the material, in conformity with definite presuppositions. The Acts knows of only one persecution in Ephesus, which, according to it, occurred at the close of splendid work, of labours accompanied by the most wonderful success. He was then expelled from the town, and driven to undertake his journey to Macedonia (xix. 23-41). This persecution originates with the heathens, and it is noteworthy that it is the only instance of the sort in the book; elsewhere in it the Jews alone are recognised as instigating hostilities against Paul, while the heathen authorities, except at Philippi, are rather represented as acting in his favour. Even here this is also the case. It is, however, the heathen mob that would destroy the Apostle for his denial of the gods, and for the damage caused by it to their cultus. The attack is plotted by the art-workers who derive their employment from the cultus of the great Artemis of Ephesus, their trade having already suffered from Paul's success (xix. 25, 27). Everything now threatens the Apostle with extreme danger. The mob drag his nearest friends, Gaius and Aristarchus, in an uproar to the theatre (xix. 29), plainly determined to have justice administered on the spot. Even the Jews of the city, though not involved in the accusation, fear lest the storm should burst upon them, and they take steps to defend themselves, *i.e.* to prove their innocence, through one of their number, named Alexander (xix. 33 f.); but the excitement is too great: he is not permitted to speak. Only, the mob have not succeeded in getting Paul himself, the peculiar object of their passion, into their hands. Paul does not indeed seek



to escape; he will, for his part, share the danger of his comrades; he is already on the point of presenting himself to the assembled multitude (xix. 30). Then the catastrophe would necessarily have overtaken him. But at this moment events take another turn. The Christians restrain him. The rulers of Asia, or at least some of them, members of the supreme heathen college of priests in the province, interest themselves for him, and keep him back (ver. 31). In due course an official, the town-clerk, rises in the assembly to pacify the people (ver. 35), and, in fact, succeeds by his clever speech in inducing them to disperse. Everything has so happened, therefore, that the main danger leaves Paul personally wholly untouched. With the Apostle's own statements this is consistent, if at all, only to the smallest extent. On the contrary, it is all the more striking that, while the Acts records an event which threatens him with proceedings, without actually bringing him to the bar, it is entirely silent, on the other hand, about the real condemnation of which we know from Paul, and which had doubtless a similar occasion. But if, in addition, we take up the individual features in this narrative, the state of the case is still more striking. Strictly speaking, the Apostle's cause, like his person, not only emerges uninjured, but absolutely victorious from the broil. Not even his comrades, on whom the mob had laid hands in his place, have anything further to endure. The popular rage passes into a riot, and then turns against the Jews. But a heathen official not only talks the assemblage out of their intentions, he directs the complainants, who had sought to allege injury to religion, to have recourse to a private suit, and he thus, accordingly, deprives the case of any public interest; nay, he hints that the assembled crowd themselves run greater risk of being charged with doing harm to the public order (xix. 35-41). Whatever therefore may have threatened the Apostle in Ephesus from heathen quarters, everything is arranged in such a way that the very course of events forms the Apostle's best possible defence. This presentation of the facts, then, so entirely different from the description by the Apostle himself, becomes neither

more nor less than the historian's defence of Paul. Nothing is left of the fight with wild beasts except a tumult in the theatre, the Apostle, against whom it is directed, being besides absent; and the deliverance in the arena has changed into the multiplied efforts of heathen authorities, priests, and officials, who all seek anxiously to ward off any danger from him. It is certainly possible, and even probable, that zeal for the great Artemis, the boast of the city, and the interests attached to her cultus, occasioned his distress in Ephesus; it is possible that the name of Demetrius, the leader of the movement against him, is historical, that some such episode as that associated with Alexander the Jew took place, and that Gaius and Aristarchus were menaced along with Paul. But the description of events cannot be correct, *i.e.* according to the facts; and its separate points possess merely the value of a faint and shadowy outline of actual reminiscences. If we may venture, besides, to compare Phoebe's commendatory letter, the gaps in the Acts only become more conspicuous, because, in its history of the Apostle's sufferings in Ephesus, there is no trace of what Prisca and Aquilas did for him, of what Andronicus and Junias suffered with him.

### § 3. *The Ephesian Church.*

We now turn from Paul's fortunes in Ephesus to the Ephesian Church. From First Corinthians we obtain only three points. In the city itself we find Aquilas and Prisca, believers and associates of Paul; they are resident there, and a congregation assembles in their house (xvi. 19). Present in the town, and closely allied with the Apostle, is Apollos (ver. 12). Finally, other Churches in the province of Asia are connected with that of Ephesus (ver. 19). From the narratives of the Acts we may here extract one noteworthy statement. After the writer's fashion, he makes Paul here also first teach among the Jews in the synagogue, and that for three months, and only then, after the hostility of a section of them makes it impossible to go on, he represents him as turning to

another way of proclaiming the gospel, and as choosing for the delivery of his addresses a different place, where, for two years, all the inhabitants of Asia, Jews and Greeks, listen to him (xix. 8, 9). This hall is named in the book the school of Tyrannus, and we have no reason for doubting the name, especially as nothing similar is mentioned elsewhere. Generally speaking, this name may have belonged to the hall from an earlier date, but it may also designate its then possessor, who, in that case, let or otherwise, granted it. Of course the same name is also used to designate the meeting-place of heathen cultus guilds; but the analogy would only be applicable here if it meant that Paul obtained a σχολή for himself. But he could neither share the hall with such a guild, nor take it over from its members. If, however, the place had been, or still was, in the possession of a sophist, the statement has further the special significance that Paul made use of a hall for public addresses, that he therefore delivered such addresses there, and that they were introduced to notice in the character thus given them, namely, as lectures by a sophist. In that case we would have the oldest example of this form of missionary activity, one which afterwards assumed an important place in the spread of Christianity, and did much to explain the toleration it received. It is very natural to remember at this point his own words, 'that a great door had opened for him in the city.' If this does not directly allude to the form of advancing the cause of which we have here spoken, it suggests, at least, a work carried out mainly in public.

But our principal information about the Church is derived from the list of greetings (Rom. xvi. 3-15). Of its twenty-six names, to which are added five groups of individuals left unnamed, sixteen are distinguished by special predicates which indicate either their qualities, their relation to the Apostle, their achievements, their history, or their present position. In the case of some their nationality is given, in that of others their rank or condition is shown. The groups contained in the enumeration, as well as isolated statements, throw, finally, some light on the state of matters within the community, on the life of the Church.

As regards nationality, Paul has expressly designated three men as Jews,—in the first place, two who are named together, Andronicus and Junias (ver. 7), and further down (11) Herodion. The former are said by him to have been Christians before himself; they had pursued their Apostolic calling independently, and that with distinction. If we add to these three Prisca and Aquilas, whose Jewish descent may be assumed from other passages, and Mary (ver. 6), whose name betrays her origin, we obtain only six individuals, and therefore, at most, a very modest fraction of the whole number. In any case, we are entitled to assume from this that even in Paul's Ephesian Church the Gentile membership very largely predominated. And of the small number of Jews, Andronicus and Junias did not owe their conversion to Paul at all, while Prisca and Aquilas were probably not converted by him, at least in Ephesus. Of the others we cannot speak with certainty. In any case, therefore, the large Jewish population of the city contributed an insignificant proportion to the Church, and the four just named were not even natives. But the Jews who were actually in the Church were closely allied with Paul, nor did they form a distinctive group in any sense whatever. Even the older Christians above mentioned attached themselves completely to the Apostle, and proved their devotion most signally. It is even worthy of note, as significant of their good relations, that Paul does not name these men Jews, but kinsmen. The former term might, on his lips, have suggested disunion, and the phrase he employs to denote the fact of their nationality not only substitutes the thought of reconciliation, but becomes a direct mark of unity and fellowship.

But this is not the only case in which such a personal connection with Paul is expressed. As a matter of course, the Apostle omits nothing of the nature of a personal relationship. Every word of this sort is for him a necessity, for those he addresses a special greeting, for both parties a renewed confirmation of the existent bond. Thus, then, three individuals are distinguished as his co-workers, *συνεργοί*: Prisca and Aquilas, and, further on, Urbanus (ver. 3, 9). This joint work can only refer

to the Apostolic promulgation, hardly in its general character, but as carried out in Ephesus and the province of Asia. These common labours themselves are specified as evangelic by the phrase 'in Christ Jesus,' or 'in Christ.' In the case of Prisca and Aquilas the local sense is clear, if only from the mention of the congregation which met in their house. But in the instance of Urbanus also, we must understand a work well known to the readers. In other respects the position of the latter was not quite the same. Paul calls Prisca and Aquilas *τοὺς συνεργούς μου*, but Urbanus *τὸν συνεργὸν ἡμῶν*, *our* co-worker. In the adjective 'our' the Apostle may include with himself, either the pair he has just named, or the whole of those mentioned in the list before Urbanus, or, on the other hand, his constant companions like Timothy, Silvanus, and Titus. In any case the distinction shows that Prisca and Aquilas occupied a different position from that of Paul's other co-workers. The Apostle distinctively set them side by side with himself. They had, indeed, from the beginning laboured along with him in a pre-eminent manner, and after they had already attested their worth independently. On the other hand, Urbanus belonged to the Apostle's fellow-labourers in the wider sense of the term, having become one of them most probably in Ephesus after his conversion. But he did not belong to the very earliest converts—a fact which is indicated if only by his place in the list.

The personal disciples of the Apostle are, like the Apostolic co-workers, expressly distinguished by the predicate *ἀγαπητός*, beloved. This predicate could also, of course, be employed in addressing the Church, when it meant simply brother, fellow-Christian. But Paul elsewhere applies it preferentially to those whom he calls his children, *τέκνα*, in the spiritual sense (1 Cor. iv. 14). Now here it is assigned, not to all the brethren, but only to four individuals in the list, namely to Epænetus (Rom. xvi. 5), Ampliatus, Stachys, and a woman named Persis (vers. 8, 9, 12). The term was certainly, not the mark of any peculiar preference, but of a closer relationship resting on objective grounds; these

had therefore been distinctively converted by Paul; others by the labours and influence which acted on the community.

Paul alludes to another personal relationship in the case of a woman, the mother of Rufus, whom he names briefly 'his and my mother' (Rom. xvi. 13). By this term of endearment he undoubtedly implies, not merely that she had evinced a motherly regard for him, but that she had given to him, in the same way as to her own son, a mother's care. She may have received him into her house.

Two other epithets can only refer to the previous history, well known in Ephesus, of those who bear them. Apelles he calls *τὸν δόκιμον ἐν Χριστῷ*, the attested in Christ (Rom. xvi. 10); Rufus, on the other hand, *τὸν ἐκλεκτὸν ἐν κυρίῳ*, the elect in the Lord (ver. 13). These were attributes which, taken generally, could be applied to every convert and true member of the Church. As a special mark of recognition they must have had a ground in fact. The predicate 'attested' is used elsewhere by Paul, at times, of working, and of teaching; at times, of suffering, and of the results effected by Christ. Here it well brings out that Apelles had adhered to the cause of the Gospel under peculiar difficulties. The designation 'elect,' applied to Rufus, can only have recalled special circumstances, in which a striking intervention of the Divine grace had been recognised, by which his conversion was effected. But, finally, in the case of Epænetus, there is not merely a reference to a particular circumstance in his earlier history, but a direct mention of the fact to which he owed his distinction. 'He is the first-fruits of all Asia' (Rom. xvi. 5), the first convert among the citizens of the province. If we take this along with the designation 'beloved,' the personal disciple of Paul, we obtain the important inference that the founding of the Church in Ephesus began with the labours of Paul.

A special form of activity, partly belonging already to the past, partly extending, as is expressly stated, into the present, is ascribed by the Apostle to four women, Mary (xvi. 6), Tryphæna, Tryphosa, and Persis (ver. 12). These he distinguishes, without any



further details, by the expression, painstaking (*κοπιᾶν*). Thus he says of Mary, 'who has taken much pains for you;' of Tryphæna and Tryphosa, 'who give themselves much pains in the Lord;' of Persis, 'who has been at much pains in the Lord.' Elsewhere this is a favourite word of Paul's for the work of the Apostolic calling, especially his own. But in 1 Cor. he says of the house of Stephanas: 'it is the first-fruits of Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to ministering to the saints,' and he adds the exhortation, that they should 'be in subjection to such and to every one who helps in the work and takes pains.' Here it is clear that 'helping in the work' (*συνεργεῖν*) applied, as in the present passage, to the promulgation of the gospel, but that by the word *κοπιᾶν*, 'the painstaking,' something additional which served the same object was designated, in fact labours on behalf of the congregation, as well as those rendered in practical benevolence. Here therefore we have also to understand both of these forms of 'painstaking,' and, since the predicate is limited to women, we should in all likelihood emphasise the latter. It is thus marked out as the peculiar sphere in which women not only proved the spirit of their faith, but also wrought for its extension and confirmation, for the gospel itself in self-sacrificing devotion. The distinction thus accorded to those described pointed therefore to their merits in voluntary labours; these labours of themselves passed into a vocation.

In surveying the composition of the whole list we cannot fail to observe that it has been arranged in a certain order, though with all natural freedom. Above all, the precedence of Prisca and Aquilas at once suggests that the prominent personalities, and especially those most closely connected with the Apostle, are cited first. After these two, Epænetus, 'the first-fruits,' follows as a matter of course; then Mary, renowned for her work; Andronicus and Junias, signalised for a threefold reason; then Ampliatus, Urbanus, and Stachys, all somewhat closely related to the Apostle. These nine individuals formed therefore a first division, directly on account of their peculiar relations to Paul as the Apostle.

There may have been special reasons for Mary's position in this group as compared with the other women afterwards described. In the same way, the fact that, in spite of their intimacy with Paul, he has not yet named Rufus and his mother, is perfectly intelligible. For this relationship was purely personal; it did not refer, like that of the others mentioned in the first division, to his Apostolic functions.

We may look on the name of Apelles as beginning a second division. Besides him we find here only Persis, as disciple of the Apostle, and the above-named Rufus and his mother, as his supporters. The rest have no predicates attached to their names similar to those in the first part. On the whole, therefore, this division represents the wider circle of church-membership. But, apart from this, we are at once struck by the prevalence of groups, partly of named, partly of unnamed individuals. Yet these groups by no means point throughout to the same principles of classification; we can rather make the following distinctions in detail.

1. Twice a number of believers are designated as belonging to the slaves of a household, viz., those of Aristobulus and Narcissus (Rom. xvi. 10, 11). The master was not a Christian, and therefore it was not his whole household, but in each case an indefinite number of his servants who had been converted. Plainly therefore the conversion of one of them had at once created a centre for the diffusion of the gospel. We have here at any rate a proof, not only that the closer social connections in general contributed to the spread of the truth, but that the servile class were especially susceptible. But it is further noticeable that in each case the group is preceded by the name of one man standing by itself. Apelles heads the Christians in the family of Aristobulus, Herodion those belonging to Narcissus. This combination, repeated as it is, is not accidental, but gives rise to the conjecture that a connection existed between the name and the household that follows it. Apelles and Herodion were, it would seem, the men who began and conducted the work in their respective families, afterwards preserving their relationship to the converts as their leaders.

2. The two women Tryphæna and Tryphosa form a group by themselves (xvi. 12). Their names suggest that they were slaves, who had been thus called by their masters. It is not very probable that they were still in servitude simply because they are praised for their painstaking, for services on behalf of the Church which presuppose a greater freedom of action, as well as the possession of means. Either therefore they had been liberated, or, if still slaves, they occupied an exceptionally favourable position. In any case their names also serve to support the opinion, derived from the previous groups, as to the social elements in the Church. After these two comes Persis, who is similarly praised for her painstaking or diaconate. Then we have Rufus and his mother. In regard to the latter the same general title to praise is not expressed, but at all events it is applicable, for she has evidenced her diaconate in the case of Paul himself (ver. 13). Here therefore are grouped together the women of this category, in fact all who are expressly assigned to it, with the exception of Mary, whose peculiar position must have been due to some special reason, which we cannot define with certainty. Possibly it is to be found in a difference in social position, perhaps in her being a Jewess, or again in her relations to the individuals placed at the head of the first division.

3. The close is formed, finally, by two parallel groups of another sort. Five names are mentioned in each, but in both cases with an indefinite number, whose names are not given, appended. In the first instance we have Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brethren who are with them (ver. 14). In the second, Philologus and Julia, probably a husband and wife, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them (ver. 15). We have no ground here to think of the dependants or slaves of distinguished houses. The view is less unlikely that would make them members of some sort of civic guilds, as, *e.g.* those of trades. But even this is improbable, because the unnamed contingent suggests something else, namely, a connection due not to any social or civic position, but to a union

in the faith. The expressions, 'the brethren who are with them,' and still more, 'all the saints who belong to them,' point to the unity of a Christian congregation. Of these two congregations, Paul names only the members in remembering whom he was most deeply interested, and who probably represented the first nucleus, the leading individuals. Now, if from this we revert to an earlier part of the list, it is probable that Apelles was similarly the leader of the Christian slaves of Aristobulus, Herodion the leader of those belonging to Narcissus. Since no one among the members of the two last groups is singled out as being more closely related to Paul than the others, there seemed nothing impossible in the conjecture that these two companies were less intimately attached to him, that they consisted of Jews. The names do not lead to this conclusion, but they can prove nothing against it. But the conjecture is negatived by the fact that, in the list, Paul has expressly named the Jews as such (ver. 7).

The examination of this list of greetings has therefore given us an insight, which must not be undervalued, into the history of the Church. Along with Paul wrought Prisca and Aquilas; they founded a congregation in their own house. The first convert in Asia, gained by Paul himself, and undoubtedly of heathen origin, was Epænetus. Ampliatus, probably also Urbanus, then Stachys and Persis followed. Urbanus became himself an Apostolic co-worker. But older Christians also found their way into the Church from without, as, *e.g.*, Andronicus and Junias, who, in spite of their Jewish descent, now took part zealously in the work of Paul. Women like Mary, Tryphæna and Tryphosa, Persis and the mother of Rufus, did their part for the cause by works of mercy. Paul himself had recourse to the care of Rufus's mother, and therefore to that extent separated from Prisca and Aquilas, in order to secure a second centre for his labours. The gospel made its way among the servants of distinguished families, of Aristobulus and Narcissus. Men of independent position like Apelles and Herodion took charge of them, and gave them their support. Elsewhere in the city believers came together here and

there as their necessities and external conditions impelled them, and publicly associated themselves together, their communion serving as a new centre and congregation. There were few Jews among them. These were reckoned without distinction with the rest. Precisely on this account Paul has carefully emphasised their origin. But they belonged to his most faithful friends.

Everything points to the conclusion that the whole formed a Church, one and undivided in spirit and in tendency. But it was not so as regards the outward form of their association. Not only was there a congregation of its own in the house of Prisca and Aquilas, but we are led besides to infer that four separate groups had their distinctive meetings. They were each conducted in different ways, according to their circumstances, sometimes by one individual, sometimes by several. The diaconate, voluntarily discharged by women, created for itself a special sphere of activity. One office alone was plainly not divided in this manner. Paul had no congregation of his own. There is nothing to suggest that he stood in any such separate connection with one or other of these groups. In the house of Rufus's mother, to which he had personally attached himself, there seems to have been no congregation; as teacher and exhorter, he and his gospel belonged to all alike. And in this he was not alone; others also whom he names side by side with himself as fellow-labourers, nay, even as Apostles (ver. 7), exercised the same general ministry.

The division of the Ephesian Christians into congregations is easily explained, when we consider the size of the town, the difficulties presented by circumstances, and the fact that the Apostle's labours had extended over several years. But it did not prevent the members recognising their unity. Phœbe of Corinth, whom the Apostle recommended to their welcome, is not directed to a house, or to a congregation, but to all. It was ever possible to cherish a living union. But the existence precisely in Ephesus of this sort of division only sheds a further light on the external conditions to be met with there. It was, if not necessary, at least advisable, in a place where such severe perse-



cutions had repeatedly occurred, where even in peaceful times the enemy was on the watch. Even if the statement of the Acts is correct, that Paul, at least at one period, delivered addresses to all and sundry in a public hall, yet that is different from the gathering together of all the Christians in the city to hold their congregational meetings in a single place.

At any rate, even after the work of several years, the situation remained such as to expose the Church to disruptive influences to a greater degree, and more readily, than would have been the case if there had been any constitution to bind it together externally as well as internally. In fact, there did not yet exist a Church in a collective sense. All the more did everything depend on the men who formed the bond of union for the separate sections. To leave the city was a grave resolve. This it was that retained the Apostle so long. And yet the actual successes of the gospel assumed such great proportions that a complete collapse was hardly to be expected.

#### § 4. *The Issue.*

Our information is slightest concerning the inner history of the Church in Ephesus, and if we consider that, according to all the indications, Paul resided in no place, throughout the whole period of his great mission, so long as in Ephesus, this is one of the most deplorable gaps in our sources. It is also to be supposed that the stirring events of the time, though caused by external circumstances, were not without their influence upon the state of things existing within the Church. When Paul speaks of having had many opponents even in the most auspicious period of his stay (1 Cor. xvi. 9), we are not certain whether he means enemies from without, heathen and Jewish, or whether he refers to enemies who professed the Christian faith. The second epistle to the Corinthians and the commendatory letter furnish us with faint and uncertain indications.

When Paul was passing through his contest with the Corinthian



Church, he was not only still resident in Ephesus, but he possessed there a firm foothold from which to settle that matter. It was from Ephesus he travelled to Corinth, thither he returned after the failure of his negotiations, thence he sent the decisive letter to Corinth. Then he was deprived even of this foothold, and all the distress which, according to his eloquent description at Troas, he suffered on his journey to Macedonia, rose from his having lost the one place without knowing whether he had recovered the other. This anxiety he depicts with the colouring of a recent recollection, but his own temper has changed; it is now dominated by satisfaction at the happy issue of events in Corinth, and his interest centres all the more exclusively in what had taken place there. On the other hand, he is full of praise of the Macedonian Churches, and the heartiness with which he speaks of them shows how much at home he now feels in their midst, and how grateful to him is his intercourse with them after the storms through which he has just passed. If we combine these facts, we can understand why Paul never returned to Asia. It is as if upon his wonderful deliverance he had banished all memories of the place, and would have fain drawn a veil not only over these latest occurrences, but over his whole past there. Even in this case it is striking that he does not mention the Asiatic brethren who were involved with him in those events. Even when he is discussing the matter of the collection, Macedonia and Achaia are alone spoken of. That may at the time have been involved in the general uncertainty. For the rest, the Church of Asia was represented in the collection. We find (Acts xx. 4) Tychicus and Trophimus as its nominees in the escort of the Apostle to Jerusalem.

But that the Church in Ephesus had not perished is proved by the letter introducing Phoebe. Undoubtedly we feel from it through what dangers the Church had passed. Among the first individuals greeted were men who had risked their lives for the Apostle, or who had shared in his imprisonment. But he is aware of those who remained true to their confession, and were able to

resume their meetings. At any rate, if we have here a complete enumeration, it is impossible to resist the impression that it contains only the remnant of the earlier body of believers. But a further observation is forced on us by the short exhortation appended (Rom. xvi. 17-20) to the greetings—an observation which confirms this very point, namely, that in what precedes we have the remnant of the faithful. Paul warns them to be on their guard against those who caused division and offence by departing from the doctrine which they had received (ver. 17). Their characterisation that ‘they serve not the Lord, but their own belly, and ingratiate themselves with fair words, full of unction and blessing’ (ver. 18), reminds us throughout of the description of the Judaists (Phil. iii. 19; Gal. vi. 13); as also the mention of Satan (ver. 20) suggests 2 Cor. xi. 14. Paul warned his Ephesian followers, as he had warned others, not to let themselves be deceived through their simplicity (ver. 19). We can therefore only suppose that the same party was seeking here to take advantage of the unfavourable fortunes and compulsory absence of the Apostle. The future of his Church had, according to this, become involved in doubt.

According to the Acts, Paul avoided Ephesus on his last journey, and merely met the elders of the Church at Miletus. The address attributed to him (xx. 18 ff.), however, contributes nothing to our knowledge of the situation existing at the time in Ephesus. The internal revolt of which it speaks is prophetic, and relates only to the future (xx. 29 f.). The words can only be used, therefore, as an authority for those changes which took place after the departure of the Apostle. What is said of the past, namely, that Paul had been exposed to persistent plots on the part of the Jews (xx. 19), is too general to be used with confidence as a tradition.

The earlier portions of the Acts which deal with Ephesus still demand attention, though they all bear the character of obscure and remodelled traditions, or are manifestly legendary. Of the latter sort are Paul’s miracles and their fabulous success (xix. 11, 12);

also the narrative of the Jewish conspirators, the sons of a Jewish chief priest named Sceva, and the soothsayers in the city (xix. 13-19). To the former class, however, belong the narratives of Apollos (xviii. 24-28), and of the Johannine disciples (xix. 1-7). The common germ in both is the existence of a Johannine baptism, and of adherents who were without knowledge or experience of the Holy Ghost. This idea has its more original form in the history of John's disciples, which however is inconsistent with itself, since they are first introduced as believers, and yet have still to be made acquainted with Jesus. If therefore the representation thus given cannot be defended, so neither can we suppose that a school of purely Johannine disciples still actually continued to exist here. The purpose of the narrative is rather to show that the faith in Christ of the Jewish Christians required the Pauline doctrine to raise it to the true spiritual faith, and to invest its followers with the Holy Ghost. The trait that the disciples of John are twelve in number, an unmistakable allusion to the primitive Apostles, shows that the whole is entirely allegorical. The extension to the case of Apollos also of this developing of Jewish Christianity by Paul, or, at any rate, his disciples Prisca and Aquilas, is plainly meant merely to prove that Apollos was not to be ranked along with Paul, but derived his mission from him. The only fact, therefore, we have to notice is that both narratives are based on the view that an imperfect Jewish Christianity existed in Ephesus before Paul had laboured there. Now we can infer from Paul's statements concerning Andronicus and Junias that precisely in Ephesus he had fellow-labourers of Jewish descent; and since these were Christians before him, we must suppose that they were yet won over by the Apostle himself to the support of his principles and mode of thought. Recollections of this sort are then indeed somewhat differently interpreted in the above narrative. The only fact of historical value left is that in Ephesus also there were to be found Jews of long standing as Christians who, though not Paul's disciples in the strict sense,

had become his allies and fellow-workers. With the question of the interference of Judaism in Ephesus this has nothing to do.

Thus even the history of Paul's mission in Asia is not wholly shrouded in darkness. But what we have gained is a picture whose outlines are faint and uncertain, isolated parts only emerging with greater clearness. The conflict with heathenism is peculiar to it. That in the life of Paul dangers and persecutions from this quarter were not wanting is fully proved by the list of his sufferings in 2 Cor. xi. But it is only in Ephesus that we learn of a conflict which repeatedly brought him to the verge of death, and which could only have arisen from religious hostility. It is wholly characteristic of the Apostle that this very fight chained him to the spot, and that he prosecuted it as long as he possibly could. Even here, indeed, an abiding creation was the fruit of his labours; those Asiatic Churches to which he refers in 1 Cor. became the foundation of the Church of Asia Minor. But the peculiarity of their fate consisted in this, that the work did not endure in the form which it received from his hand. After the storms which passed over it, a re-creation, a second beginning, was required to ensure its permanence.

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